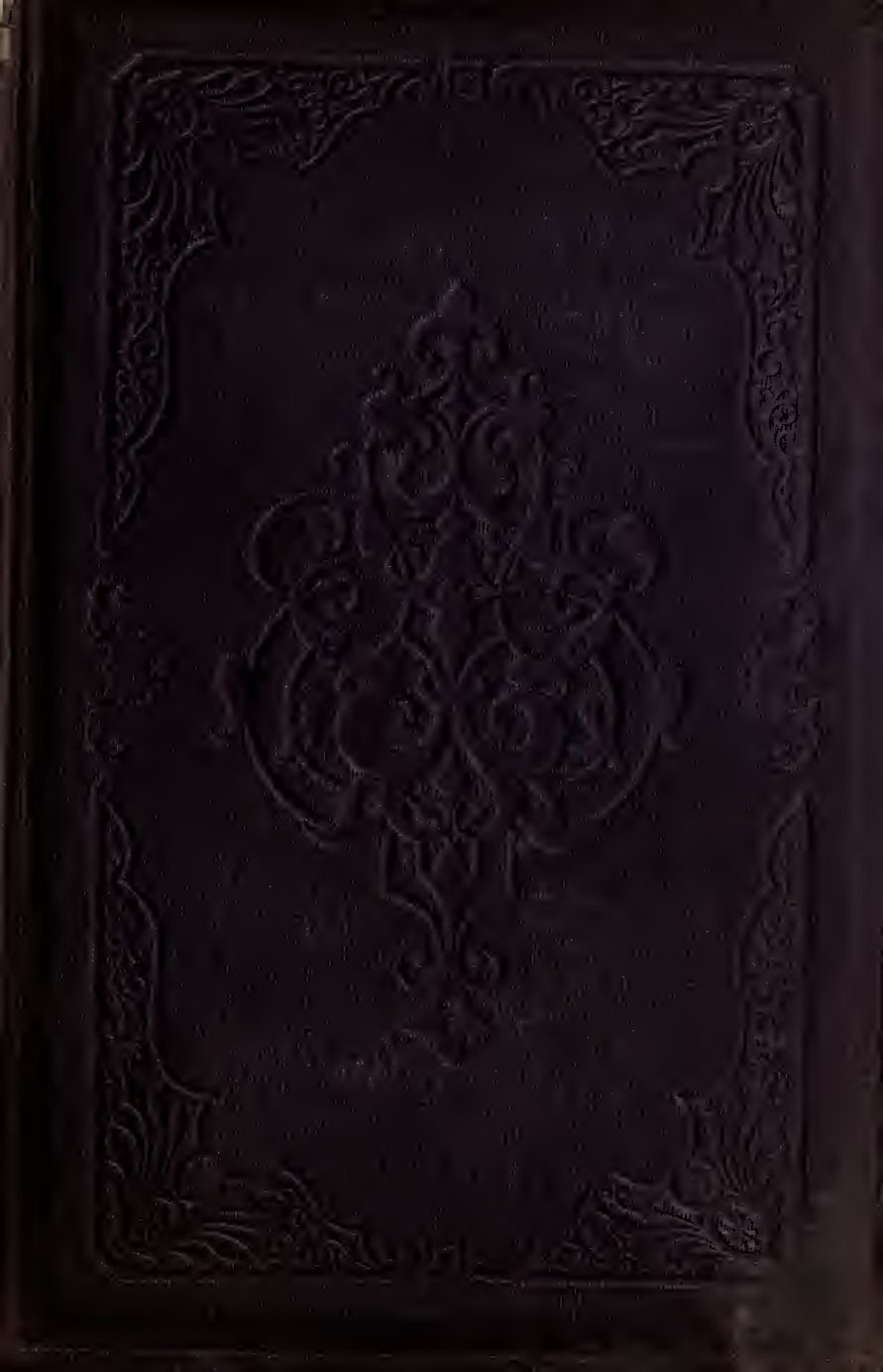

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"But go now: I forgive you. After this it is doubtless better that we should part." P. 262.

"Paul shall be the son of the Wild Cat" said he, "and the White Eagle must go back as he came. He can not fly swift enough to save his young one from the rocks."

P. 149.

CAMP FIRES

OF

THE RED MEN:

OR,

A Hundred Years Ago.

BY J. R. ORTON.

A tale of love and arms,
Of wild-wood sights and flowers, and forest men,
Where white plumes nod to red, and noble hearts
Beat in bronze breasts as freely as in pearl.

High and low are of one blood—we are all brothers.

ILLUSTRATED BY WALCUTT.

New York:
J. C. DERBY, 119 NASSAU STREET.
BOSTON: PHILLIPS, SAMPSON AND CO.
CINCINNATI: H. W. DERBY.
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PREFACE.

The writer of this history is aware that the critics are prone to smile at all attempts at confidences between an author and the public. Still, in the present instance, he is disposed for a very brief period to take his stand at the confessional. He is frank to say that his work is not what he would endeavor to make it, were plot and detail now for the first to be determined. A considerable time has elapsed since it was written—in truth, it has been held in reserve much more than the period prescribed by the discreet Horace: but notwithstanding the space allotted to ripening, and a very thorough revision, the broad features of the original cast were found too deeply set to admit of material change. He would now, were it practicable, modify some of the incidents—render them less vivid in color as well as more sober in character—and he would also, in some cases, amplify and extend them, even at the risk of win-

nowing some favorite portions quite away; for it may be charged, with a show of reason, that the events occasionally crowd very closely on each other's heels. In short, were he to write again, with an equal freedom of choice as to subject and action, he would select a different field, and court invention and adventure less, and quiet more; for the storm of passion and the blast of the trumpet are not so much to his taste now as they were once.

But, after all, he is by no means certain that the public would be well pleased with the change. The book contains his early fresh thoughts, fancies, and feelings, frankly spoken; and will appeal strongly to the buoyant and more honest side of life; and so, consoling himself with the belief that it is defaced by no unworthy sentiment, and that it presents in the main a fair picture of the times as they existed among us a century ago, when the Georges of England were our kings, and the Confederacy of the Six Nations of Red Men our allies, he is content to submit it into the hands of the publishers as it is.

BROOKLYN, *August*, 1855.

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CAMP FIRES OF THE RED MEN:

OR,

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Chapter One.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

"Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust."

AS the eye rests on the map of the American Republic, and notes the innumerable cities, towns, and villages which dot its surface, it is difficult to realize that but little more than two centuries have elapsed since this whole region was a vast and scarcely broken wilderness. Especially to him who has learned from observation something of the real growth and civilization, the resources and the power, of this commonwealth; who is not only familiar with the Atlantic slope, but has penetrated the vast interior, stopping not east of the Alleghanies, nor yet east of the Mississippi; who has traversed the noble Hudson, viewed our canals, flown over our railroads; and, compassing the northern lakes, has descended the father of rivers, pushing his way into the interminable West; literally led on, as his steam-ship cleft the waves, by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night; and who, ever as he went, has found an active and intelligent population, enjoying the

distinctive comforts of civilized life, the frequent church, school-house, and printing-press, the bustling mart and the luxurious city, skirted by hills and vales and prairies teeming with fruit and yellow grain, a thousand miles beyond the seaboard—especially to one who has witnessed all this, do the changes which so short a period has wrought seem like the fabled work of enchantment. The forest, as it were, in a day has been turned into a smiling and cultivated landscape—the desert in a night been made to blossom as the rose.

So late as the middle of the eighteenth century, the period near which the events narrated in these pages are supposed to have occurred, but a small portion of those vast continental improvements, at which we have glanced, had been effected. These United States were then colonies of the British crown; and as yet no day-dream or vision of sleep had presented to the imaginations of the hardy colonists a glimpse of the magnificent future which awaited them. New York was at that time a bustling town of some ten or twelve thousand inhabitants; and Boston, and Philadelphia—the city of the meek and philanthropic Penn—both of about the same size and pretensions, were its active rivals. These three towns formed the strongholds of that portion of North America which owed allegiance to Great Britain. The French held the Canadas and Louisiana, and bore themselves proudly in their fortresses of Quebec and Montreal, and on the bosoms of their boasted rivers the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi. The Spanish possessed Florida. The Atlantic and Gulf coasts, it is true, from Acadia to the Bayous of Louisiana, were dotted with frequent settlements, many of them in a prosperous condition, and gradually reaching inland. The good Dutch city of Albany was also at that period a place of note, and sheltered under its motherly wings several contiguous hamlets; but these, in 1750, were frontier points, marking the extreme bounds of civilized life; while all beyond, save an occasional

Indian trading post, or military fastness, like Niagara or Du Quesne, still retained its original features; and unmarred by the cunning devices of Europeans, was yet under the joint dominion of the beasts and the savages. The entire white population at this period, of British, French, and that part of Spanish America which has been named, did not probably exceed a million and a quarter; or that of one of the second-class States of our present Republic.

A hundred years ago the Indian tribes bordering on the Atlantic formed an important element in the history of the times. The Six Nations, in particular, were then in the glory of their strength, and powerful enough to make themselves both feared and respected. Proud, eloquent, and warlike, they furnished a favorable specimen of the original man of America; and were alike the terror of their savage neighbors, and the whites who provoked their hostility. England and France, in their struggle for the mastery in the New World, found it necessary to court the friendship and alliance of this aboriginal confederacy; and by their constant intrigues involved it in a succession of domestic broils, and exterminating wars with neighboring tribes, which, in connection with the civilized vices introduced among them, and the destruction of their hunting-grounds, induced a rapid decrease of their numbers and decay of their power. It is a melancholy reflection that like causes seem still operating with fatal certainty toward the ultimate total extinction of the Indian name on the American Continent.

At the present period scarcely a vestige of the Six Nations remains. The inhabitant of central New York, as he surveys his luxuriant domain, or moves among the bustle and display of some new-made city, a Utica, a Rochester, a Buffalo, sprung into being in a night, like the magic palace of Aladdin, stops not to think that within the memory of some centennial father still alive, this garden of the State was the center of a

powerful Indian commonwealth, which had its armies of brave and noble warriors, its eloquent orators and priests, its frequent villages, its orchards, and meadows, and cultivated fields, and that he holds his tenure by the extinction of the council fires of a broad empire. Little do any of us stop to consider, as curiosity induces a hasty examination of the frequent mounds with which many parts of our country are dotted, or as the plowshare turns up some moldering relic of humanity, that we are disturbing the bones of the old lords of the soil, whose destruction from among men has given place, and wealth, and importance to this portion of the great American Republic.

Time levels and again rebuilds. Change is the order of nature. Not nations and people alone, but every gradation of existence; the earth, and the seas and dry lands which compose it; the eternal hills, and the whole universe, so far as human observation extends, are the subjects of this mutation. Nothing is absolved, save the immutable laws, which the eye of philosophy has but feebly scanned, that doubtless reduce all changes, however incongruous they may appear, to a system of general development and harmonious order. The old world, or that part of it of which we know any thing, so far back as the lamp of history sheds a glimmer, has ever been altering like the figures of a kaleidoscope, or the shifting scenes of a panorama. It is trite to speak of the glory of the East, but who can cease to wonder at its story? Who can forget that Egypt was once the light of the world; that Belshazzar feasted in Babylon, with its hundred brazen gates; that Jerusalem was set on a hill, and the pillars of its Temple were of brass, and the hinges of its doors of pure gold? Who can forget that strength cometh down from the north; and that the wizard star of empire ever moveth westward? That mysterious star, slowly quitting Asia, poured its golden light, in succession, on Greece, Rome, France, Spain, and Britain;

and at last hath risen on America ; where, with the promise of an unusual altitude and splendor, it has spanned a continent with its rays, from the rock-bound coast of New England to the Golden Gate of California. Here may it rest for a time in its march of destiny.

America is called young, but she is old. The ancient sun, which hath seen all parts of the earth from the beginning, now lights at least the morning of the second era of her greatness. The existence of the first is alone known to us by vague tradition, and the ruins of its cities, its temples, and its tombs, over which forests, the growth of centuries, have clustered. When these were built, or when they perished; by whom they were peopled, or by whom or what destroyed, are alike hidden and unknown. The cunning works of the artisan meet the eye ; but the hands that wrought them are not to be found ; and the account thereof, if ever written, has not come down to us.

Chapter Two.

THE READER IS UNEXPECTEDLY INTRODUCED TO THE HERO OF THE STORY.

THE sun of a soft autumnal day, though far in its wane, was still glowing with mellow luster on the frowning castle and higher portions of the good city of Quebec, as a military officer, in the full scarlet uniform of England, emerged from one of the principal hotels of that place, known as the Unicorn, to take a birds-eye view of the town. A female, hooped and belted, with a hat and feather whose dimensions would startle a modern belle, walked by his side, her hand lightly resting on his arm, with a step as staid and military as his own.

"Who are they?" was eagerly asked by the curious Frenchmen who thronged the steps and bar-room of the tavern. The host gravely shook his head; but the questioners were old friends and customers, and very shortly thinking better of it, he informed them, in a confidential tone, that the strangers were a British officer of rank, and his sister.

"When did they arrive?"

"This morning."

"In the George the First, below?"

"Yes."

A grave silence of a minute or two followed, to give time, as would seem, for the proper digestion of the important facts elicited; when one of the loungers again addressed the landlord:

"It is singular, Gilbert, that a British officer of rank should

be prying about his Majesty's fortress of Quebec, and nobody know either his name or business.

"My friends," returned the prudent Gilbert, "you know that I can deny you nothing. I trust every thing to your discretion, which I have so often tried. The gentleman is Colonel Warwick, of the colony of New York; and he is here on a very delicate mission, a question of great importance between the two crowns; the nature of which I dare not—'pon my honor, you must excuse me—my life——"

"Aha!" drawled the interrogator: and all present exchanged significant glances with each other, and with the discreet host of the Unicorn.

Meanwhile the subjects of this dialogue were enjoying a delightful stroll through the town. The officer admired the castle, and the huge rocks and precipitous ascents which give strength to Quebec as a military post; the lady, the gentler sights; whatever was novel or imposing in architecture, tasteful in shrubbery and grounds; and the river prospect, and distant hills, already variegated with those red and yellow tints which, although the first footprints of decay, by their brilliant hues and contrasts shut from us the reflection that the year is old and dying, and kindly clothe our autumnal landscapes, as they approach the sleep of winter, in a gorgeous mantle of beauty.

A period of silent admiration was at length interrupted by the lady.

"See there, brother; there are some Indians," said she, pointing a little in advance, where a company of American natives were seated on the ground, smoking and talking with high garrulity.

"True, Betty," replied the officer; "but surely by this time Indians can be no great matter of wonderment to you. We see them every day in New York."

"Yes, but look at that little fellow, there," continued the

lady, pointing with her finger, "how fair he is!" We do not have white Indians with us, Charles. I wonder if it is the difference in the climate. See, he has bright flaxen hair, and, for a marvel, blue eyes. If he were only washed and dressed properly, he would be a beautiful boy, brother."

The subject of these remarks, a pale, slender lad of some seven years of age, was sitting a little apart from his companions; but except the peculiarities noted by Mistress Warwick, there was nothing to distinguish him from the other children of the party. A blanket was loosely thrown over his shoulders, and beneath it was a shirt of some cotton stuff. These two articles completed his apparel, his head and feet being entirely bare. The expression of his countenance was intelligent but sad; and as Colonel Warwick and his sister approached, he arose, with a seeming consciousness that he had attracted their attention.

"This is no Indian child," said the Colonel, addressing the group. "Where did you get him?"

But none of them understood English. The lad meanwhile appeared to be singularly affected. At the sound of an English voice he started, his eye brightened, the blood rushed in a volume to his pale face; and he sprung forward as though to throw himself in the Colonel's arms, but ere the act was accomplished, shrunk back abashed, and stood trembling, with his tearful eyes fastened on the countenance of the officer. Colonel Warwick was affected. He took the child's hands in his, and spoke to him in tones of kindness. He could, however, gain nothing intelligible in return. The youth replied in an uncouth aboriginal dialect, and indeed appeared to change to several different tongues, in the hope of being understood: but all were equally Greek to the kind-hearted officer.

The Colonel applied himself again to the savages, in French; and this time with better success. But the information he was able to gather from their broken replies was

meager in the extreme.. They were either ignorant of the history of the lad, or were determined to conceal it. They were only certain of one fact, and that was that he was of English parentage. The further account they gave was, in substance, that some months previously, far in the interior, by the Great Lake, the youth was given them by a warrior of the Hurons ; and they acknowledged that one great motive of their present visit to Quebec was to dispose of him for a supply of ammunition and blankets.

It will surprise no one that the hand of Colonel Warwick instinctively sought his purse ; and that he paid without hesitation the few guineas that were claimed as a ransom for the child. Mistress Warwick, however, on comprehending the transaction, held up her palms in horror.

" You are not going to buy him, brother, are you ? Awful ! Who ever heard of buying a Christian before !"

" Why, Betty !" returned the Colonel ; " pray what did you pay for your maid, Sue ?"

" Ah, there you are hard on me, brother. But Susannah is black ; and every body buys and sells black people."

" At home, you mean, sister. In some parts of the world, and this it seems is one of them, it is customary to buy and sell white people."

Taking the little captive, whose eyes sparkled with pleasure, by the hand, Colonel Warwick and his sister pursued their ramble.

" But what in the name of goodness, Betty," exclaimed the Colonel, " can I do with this young savage ? He seems a pleasant little fellow enough."

" I was just turning the problem in my mind, brother," replied Mistress Warwick. " If he looks as well as I think he will, when he is washed, and respectably clothed, and gets the tan off ; and should prove to be amiable and intellectual, why not keep him yourself, and make a man of him ? You

are now getting along so far in life without marriage, that I very seriously doubt whether that interesting event, with you, is ever destined to occur; and I can not but think that a child in the house would often relieve you from *ennui*."

"Right, Bet," said the Colonel with a laugh; "and in that particular it seems to me that your prospects and mine are very like; and as there is small probability of our ever being troubled with children of our own, suppose we jointly take charge of this helpless creature, and in this way pay, in part, the debt we owe to society. As you are the head of my bachelor establishment, it seems needful that the act be one of copartnery."

"I will think of it," returned Mistress Warwick. "We will see how he appears on acquaintance. Our means, you know, brother, are limited, and we have needy relatives in England. Our niece Julia, on the occurrence of a certain contingency, is very likely to be thrown on our hands. Still, this poor little fellow must be cared for by somebody, and I will not shrink from my share of the responsibility. I agree to your proposition, Charles; we will adopt him, and Julia, too, should it become necessary."

"Spoken like yourself, Betty," said the Colonel. "We read of the widow's cruse that never run dry, which is intended to teach us that he who has a heart for charity shall not want the means. I doubt not we shall have enough."

"But what shall we call the youngster?" said Mistress Warwick. "I suppose he has a name if we could only ascertain it. Doubtless his real Christian name is lost forever; and he is now known by some heathenish Indian word, which would hardly answer to introduce into good society. What shall we call him, brother?"

"Suit yourself as to a name, Betty," replied Colonel Warwick. "But stay: if you think of nothing better, call him Charles Warwick, Junior."

"What, after yourself?"

"Why not? Where is the objection?"

"Would it be exactly proper?" said Mistress Warwick, very deliberately. "Would not suspicious people make remarks?"

"Well, let them make remarks," rejoined the Colonel, firmly. "I have lived too long in this fault-finding world to care very particularly whether people make remarks or not, especially when unconscious of any improper conduct to induce it. Here, Charles, you little rascal, look up! Will you engage to be a good boy, and love me, if I give you my own name? No doubt, no doubt."

Thus saying, Colonel Warwick took his pitiful charge in his arms, and gave him a hearty embrace; and unmindful of the crowd of loungers congregated about the Unicorn, who verily did both stare and make remarks at the singular exhibition, bore him, in a sort of triumph, into the hotel, and to his own room.

Chapter Three.

THE YOUTH SO OPPORTUNELY DISCOVERED, APPROVES HIMSELF A LAD OF PARTS, WITH SOMETHING OF THE FEELINGS OF A MAN.

COLONEL WARWICK belonged to that large but honorable category of younger sons of consequential families, who in England, time out of mind, that the representative of the house may be sustained with becoming revenues and dignity, have been crowded, with a very slim provision, into the several professions. He selected that of arms, and had served his country at home and abroad, in both Indies, and America, with ability and success. Without the aid of special favoritism, he had gradually risen from a starting-point sufficiently obscure to his present honorable position in his Britannic Majesty's service. With elevation of rank came increase of emolument, so that, with his unexpensive habits, as age began to appear in the perspective, he had the consolation to know that he had secured a moderate competency for his declining days. With this, at one time, he had meditated retiring from his profession, and seeking the rewards of a life of toil and hardship in domestic quiet. But then the meridian of life was passed. When he would have married, he had been prevented both by his poverty, and the unsettled manner and uncertain tenure of the life he led: and now he very justly doubted the propriety of encumbering himself with a wife, or a wife with him. Marriage, he was accustomed to say, was a thing that a man should get used to in his youth, in order to enjoy it. With him, he could not but think the period of honey-moons was

passed. He could not keep up with the agility of a young wife, who would always be ahead of him; and to an old one there were objections which gallantry forbade him to name; so that he would ever continue to subscribe himself Charles Warwick, bachelor, till death; happy in being honored, if not caressed.

Having formed a deliberate judgment, he was not the man to swerve from it; and accordingly proceeded to attach to himself a maiden sister, of nearly his own age, and accepted an easy berth in America. There, for the last few years, principally in New York, life with both had passed, if not joyfully, at least quietly, and with few regrets. Under somewhat of a stiff exterior, the brother and sister, in reality, concealed qualities which do honor to our nature: and if to strange eyes they appeared stately and old-fashioned, when one came to know them better, he could not fail to admire the affectionate simplicity and purity of their lives. Their present journey to Canada was solely one of pleasure, and not a government affair, as the publican of the Unicorn, for the sake of creating wonder, and magnifying his own consequence, had so impudently asserted.

The morning subsequent to the events narrated in the preceding chapter, Mistress Warwick arose, and with all convenient dispatch proceeded to look after her charge. She found him in the street fronting the hotel, the cap and shoes which had been provided for him the evening before laid aside, engaged, with bow and arrow, in a heroic attack on the nondescript beast which bore himself so grimly upon the apex of mine host's sign-post.

"Charles! Charles! my child," exclaimed the good matron, "what are you about? Come in, my dear, out of the sun and dust."

The lad, without comprehending a word she uttered, threw by his weapons and tripped toward her, his face beaming

with happiness and smiles. He yielded himself to her with perfect docility, and showed himself anxious and ready to comprehend her wishes and obey them. She directed him by signs, and he resumed his cap and shoes ; and on being made to understand that he should perform an ablution, he bounded away to the river, which was near by, and very shortly was plunging and swimming, a rival to the ducks.

Mistress Warwick in alarm sought the Colonel.

"Brother ! brother !" said she, "Indian Charles is in the St. Lawrence. Come quickly, or he will be drowned !"

She led him to a window where a view of the white savage was to be obtained, as he laved his limbs and sported in the waves, with the freedom of a dolphin. The Colonel burst into a loud laugh.

"I think not, Betty," said he. "I should sooner expect to drown a Newfoundland dog than that fish of a child. He seems as much at home there as a waterfowl ; and were my classic lore not long since dissipated, I should say he was quite fit to become a page to Neptune himself, or any other of the gods of the sea."

The garments which had been bespoken were soon brought home, and Master Charles was arrayed in a neat and fashionable suit. The improvement in his appearance, in consequence, was matter of great congratulation to his kind mistress ; and every body seemed better pleased at the change than the lad himself. He liked the handsome articles well enough, as he held them in his hand ; but being robed in them was a very different concern. His limbs, accustomed to free and unrestricted motion, could not well brook the prison of close breeches and coat ; he could neither stand, nor sit, nor walk with any ease ; and much less could he run, as was his wont, like the wild colt of the prairie, through field, and forest, and river, thus encumbered. The struggle to endure them, ere use had rendered them familiar, almost made him melan-

choly, and came near disgusting him at the outset with the modes of civilized life.

As Colonel and Mistress Warwick were not of the number of those who perform their benevolent actions by the halves, they at once set about the due instruction of their protege. By turns, or conjointly, as fancy or convenience dictated, the good old bachelor and maid busied themselves with teaching him to speak the English tongue, of which, if he ever had any knowledge, no vestige now remained. The first lesson consisted in familiarizing him with the name of every thing he saw; repeating to him, and encouraging him to utter, those mysterious sounds which, to the initiated, so readily call up visions of chairs, tables, fire, water, trees, the clouds, the sun; and all other substantive things, material or immaterial, in the wide universe of creation or thought.

But leaving the Colonel to bring the exercises of the first morning to a satisfactory conclusion, Mistress Warwick, as mothers and maiden aunts in behalf of their pets are very apt to do during the holidays—and to Master Charles, the early days of his liberation were emphatically such—silently slipped on her hat and shawl and went shopping. An alphabet and some books of simple reading, as things of absolute necessity, were first procured; next, as an offset to the useful, a large basket of sundries, viz., a bulky package of confections; a dumb watch, which had the voice of a watch, inasmuch as it could be wound up with a clatter, but the hands were painted on its face; a wooden lion; a dog on rockers that barked out of his back; a black swan; a pewter cavalry-man who marched on wheels; a nightingale which sung with a bellows; a tin sword, and a wooden gun.

Such was the sporting establishment of a young gentleman of six or seven, a hundred years ago; and in this respect, it must be confessed, the age of improvement has made but little change. Toys, however, constitute very properly with child-

hood, the grave affairs of life. Master Charles examined the collection of holiday trinkets, of which he had so unexpectedly come in the possession, with curious eyes ; but when he was made to comprehend that he should amuse himself by rocking his dog, or marching his soldier on wheels, he pushed them from him with an expression bordering on contempt. Mistress Warwick was surprised, and thought him a strange child ; the Colonel shrugged his shoulders, and called him a sensible one.

A few days terminated the stay of the British officer and his sister at Quebec ; when, accompanied by the child they had rescued from bondage, they returned to New York.

Chapter Four.

OUR HERO IS RAPIDLY LED ON INTO THE REALITIES OF LIFE AND MANHOOD.

"Look through the garden and the sunny vale,
Upon the beds and by the streamlets sighing,
And blight hath struck and turned the brightest pale—
The lily droops, the fairest rose is dying."

THE reader will please accept the youth, with a fair skin and the habits of a savage, to whose informal christening in the streets of Quebec he was a witness, as the hero of this history. His benefactors placed him at school. At first he was a dull scholar, so far as books were concerned; but showed himself apt at acquiring oral language and ideas which were presented to him in any other form than through the routine of his lessons. Slowly he gave up his wild customs, and adopted the manners of civilization, and with all was tractable and kind, and approved himself a lad of parts and promise. Colonel and Mistress Warwick became fondly attached to him, and gradually came to regard him in the light of a son.

Until he became sufficiently acquainted with the English tongue to express himself clearly, Colonel Warwick carefully refrained from any allusion to his early history. Then, indeed he questioned him with much minuteness, hoping to gain some clew as to his parentage, a subject which, at some future period, he was aware could not fail to become one of engrossing interest to the youth himself. He found the lad's recollection imperfect and fragmentary. He had no knowledge of a mother.

His father he remembered distinctly, but his name, calling, or place of abode was beyond his recall. He was inclined to think that he had never seen a white man until he was taken to Quebec; and that his father was an Indian, but quite different, he admitted, from other savages. He had loved this parent tenderly, and recollected well that he was forcibly separated from him. A savage, called by different unpronounceable names in different localities, had seized him while at play and borne him off. The image of a vast precipice, down which at one time his captor was about to hurl him, was indelibly impressed on his memory; and he was quite certain that at the moment when this great danger was impending, his father was on the other side of the gulf, pressing on to his rescue. But he never saw that father more. His Indian master urged him forward. They traveled a weary way over rivers and lakes, and through interminable wildernesses, and at length found rest with a strange and distant tribe. But this was only temporary. Soon his uneasy captor was on the wing again, and for years they wandered from tribe to tribe, until the savage, apparently tired of his charge, passed him into the hands of the party who had taken him to Quebec.

Such was the sum of the information which, with much painstaking, Colonel Warwick was able to extract from the beclouded memory of his adopted son relative to the incidents of his early life. He was disappointed. He had hoped for more. Still, it is not improbable that he loved him all the better for the loneliness of his condition and the mystery which surrounded him. The boy seemed more completely his own.

The history of children, even remarkable ones, is not always either interesting or instructive; and we shall make no apology for the haste with which we pass over the remaining period of the childhood of our hero, to the time when he commenced to work out the destiny of his life. With him the lapse of years made very great changes. At ten, few traces of his sav-

age habits remained. He was a fair, gentle, intelligent boy, exhibiting, on occasion, much energy and courage. As he still advanced in age, a thoughtful cast of character and a fine sense of the beautiful were developed. Books became a passion with him; and nature, quiet, lovely nature, almost a subject of adoration. He delighted to rove by brooks and streams, to clamber up the hillside, and cull the wild-wood flowers. Each mount, and rock, and stream, and dell possessed its separate charm, and even the simple tree as it towered alone, and stood out relieved against the sky, was to him a vision of delight. Poetry, music, and eloquence had the power to stir every faculty of his soul, and thrilled along his nerves with a vibration as distinct as though they had been the strings of a harp touched by the fingers of a player. But when the elements were astir, when Nature put on her gala-dress of storms, and, marshaling her black squadrons in the sky, with the voice of thunders, and with flames, and winds, and waters, made war, as it were, on herself, he was rapt in a sort of ecstacy: he saw no danger, and he felt no fear.

Such was the youth whom Colonel Warwick had rescued from the ignorance and degradation of a savage. Still, with all his fervency of imagination, young Charles Warwick regarded men and things with a clear, unclouded eye. He early saw that life was a very different affair from the pictures of his fancy, or the descriptions of the romancers, and accommodated himself to it. The conviction, it is true, cost him a struggle and a pang; and if ever he sighed for a forest life again, it was when the stern realities of existence, disrobed of all poetic drapery, became a truth to his mind and the governing principle of his actions.

At school, his genius and temperament were not always understood. He was a close student, but quite too excursive in his researches to command the praises and awards of the faculty. He had many friendly admirers but few intimates.

The society of the gentler sex was to him a source of elevated enjoyment; and still he found himself unfitted for the gay trifling, of which good society, then as now, was composed. His disposition was sensitive: he possessed a keen appreciation of the ludicrous, and a strict sense of integrity which forbade, from the first, that he should ever play with that delicate and fragile instrument—a woman's heart. He was accordingly regarded by some as unduly timid and reserved.

It is not to be supposed but that his peculiar situation, dependent, though he was never made to feel it, and at the same time ignorant if even a drop of kindred blood flowed in the veins of any living creature, operated powerfully, nay, at times, preyed like a vulture on his heart. Had he a father? a mother? brothers or sisters? He would have given worlds to know. But memory was tortured in vain. Her stores, if any she had, were deeply buried, far beyond the reach of recollection. He barely remembered a father, but even the quarter of the globe in which he lived was to him unknown.

At twenty, Charles Warwick entered on the active business of life as a soldier. Circumstances, especially the predilection of his benefactor, to which the ardent temperament of the youth himself was by no means opposed, had conspired to make him one; and he commenced his career, as is the pleasing privilege of the young, with high hopes and an honorable ambition, which perceived in the future no point too elevated to be attained. His general duties were not arduous. It was now a period of repose with the Colonies. England and France were resting on their weapons after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and secretly strengthening themselves for the struggle which followed. The principal source of anxiety was an unquiet condition of the Confederacy of the Six Nations, with whom the emissaries of France were known to be tampering; and in protracted negotiations with those children of the forest, it was the rare good fortune of our young soldier

to distinguish himself, and in a civil rather than a military field. He exhibited a knowledge of Indian character, and a tact in the management and conciliation of the red men, which were duly appreciated in the proper quarters, and rewarded with a very gratifying advance of rank and consequence.

Meanwhile age was setting his seal in deeper and deeper characters on the features of Colonel and Mistress Warwick. In the absence of their protege, however, they were still consoled by the presence of their niece Julia, whom they had not failed to invite from England, and who, of nearly the same age as our hero, had been brought up as his companion and playmate, and been taught to regard him as a brother. On his part the feeling was fully reciprocated. He looked on the gentle blue-eyed girl as a sister, and gave her strength, as the sun invigorates a flower; while she, in return, leaned on him in confiding trust, and looked with happy pride on his strong and manly qualities, and was of a disposition so meek that it never occurred to her to be jealous of the favor and expense which her relations showered upon him, an unknown foundling though he was. But Julia was also of a delicate frame, and soon the seeds of disease developed themselves in her system, and she saw, and all saw, that she would shortly be called to go hence. The event occurred just as young Warwick had won his first laurels in the strife of manhood. The maiden fell asleep, like a flower withered in the morning, though willing to fold its petals for the once, that it might burst into a richer and imperishable bloom, in the empire of the skies.

It is said that the strokes of fate rarely come single; and so the soft eyes of Julia were hardly closed on the light of life, when she was followed by her guardian and more than father, Colonel Warwick. His illness was short, and he died as he had lived, calmly, and at peace with all the world. His latest breath called down blessings on the head of his son;

and he expired in his arms. This double stroke was a heavy one to young Charles Warwick; it gave him a new insight into life, and the materials whereof it is composed.

Oh Death! thou never sleepest; and when least expected, thy fleshless fingers are upon us. Thou art like the winds, visiting all things, and culling thy victims by the touch, for thou art blind. Else wouldst thou spare the fair, the gentle, and the good, and confine thy ravages to those who burden the earth with their sins; and to the ripe sheaf, which has sunned out its day, which should not, and cares not to say thee nay. But thou art no respecter of persons. Thou strikest down age and youth alike, even the flower, which as yet but for a day has been fanned by the perfumed air of life. Thine iron hand is on the world. Thou marchest with thy scythe in advance of the conqueror, and when thou willest, turnest upon him. Thou speakest to kings and they tremble. Thou breathest on nations and they die. And yet thou art the good Angel of Deliverance and Hope.

Chapter Five.

THE BARNEGAT HOTEL. A LANDSCAPE BY THE SEA.

"Cease to lament for that thou canst not help."

WE are now approaching a period in the life of Charles Warwick when the events of years can no longer be crowded into a chapter. We have dwelt sufficiently on his youth, and sketched with sufficient distinctness the character of his mind, to prepare the reader for any act which, in his subsequent career, it may become our business to narrate.

Colonel Warwick left a will, by which his moderate fortune was bequeathed jointly to his sister and his adopted son; with the single proviso, that the youth continue to bear his name. But what is money to a wounded spirit? Grief, pale, corroding grief, which for the time overshadowed every hope and anticipation of life, sorrow for the ripe sheaf, sorrow for the flower, lay at the heart of the young soldier so coldly as nearly to sever the hold of his affections on the world. It was the unrestrained woe of Mistress Warwick, his mother, as he had been taught and delighted to call her, and the necessity of making an attempt to console her, which first enforced on him the propriety of curbing his own grief. In soothing her he occupied his mind, and discovered in addition that in the holy task there was also consolation for himself. Soon his own good sense instructed him, that though the dead should be kindly remembered, it is vain, worse than vain, to inordinately grieve for them. The living claim our care; the dead are in the hands

of Him who gave them to the world, and took them from it; and it is not sound reason to suppose that our departed friends, though they may still be cognizant of our actions—angels floating round us—are at all gratified with our unceasing tears and lamentations. No griefs, no perplexities, no possible combination of calamities, should ever be suffered to break down the energies of the mind. Religion and philosophy alike teach us this, alike inculcate resignation to the inevitable ills of life, and alike encourage us under all circumstances to hope. True, such is the weakness of our nature, and the dimness of our faith, that it seems nearly inevitable that we should become prostrated by some of those sudden and tremendous strokes which occasionally visit us; but the mind ought to be so well balanced as to recover its strength with a rebound almost as sudden as the shock; and very shortly, its perfect buoyancy: and he is a man indeed, who has so schooled and braced his mental powers that no event can shake them, and still preserves in their freshness those sensibilities and sympathies which are the redeeming and most beautiful traits of the human character.

But with most persons time is the only effectual soother of sorrow, and thus Warwick found it. Busied again with the duties of his profession and the cares of life, the present ultimately resumed its hold over him, and anon other hopes and anticipations took the place of those which were blighted. He regained his spirits; and though the past was by no means obliterated from his memory, it receded from the forefront of the mental screen to the background, where it remained like the haze of twilight or a distant cloud.

It was near the evening of a fine spring day when our young officer and his aged mother, on their return from the South, whither they had been on a tour of health and pleasure, as far as Jamestown, in the Colony of Virginia, found themselves at a hotel, overlooking the sea, in a most wild and pic-

turesque portion of New Jersey. The house was a low, old-fashioned red building, covering considerable ground; and was very comfortably fitted up for a country establishment of the period; but there was one peculiarity about it which could not fail to strike a stranger with surprise. The furniture and appendages seemed to have been gathered from the four quarters of the globe, and with a very small reference to propriety or fitness. Broken masts and spars, ropes and torn sails, anchors and pieces of ordnance, lay scattered around; and a marble figure of Apollo, of respectable workmanship, kept guard over a water-trough in the court-yard. Within, the contrast was equally remarkable. Rich sofas and chairs, Turkey carpets of disproportionate size to the floors they covered, and spread about without order; pier-glasses, vases, marble tables, pictures, and damask curtains were mixed in with wooden benches, deal stools and tables, and other rustic furniture. This incongruity at once attracted the notice of our travelers, who, aware that this coast was famous for its shipwrecks, came to the conclusion that many of the articles in question had been rescued from the deep; and that each, could it speak, might tell a story involving something beyond insensible matter—a tale of human vicissitudes and sorrows.

After supper, Mistress Warwick and her son walked out upon the cliffs which overlooked the ocean. The verdure of the region seemed principally confined to the acclivity occupied by the hotel. There was a background of stunted trees and distant hills, interspersed with occasional cleared patches and mean huts. In front, at the foot of a ragged line of cliffs, was a broken beach, and the interminable and deceptive sea, disfigured with projecting rocks, which sufficiently indicated the dangers of the coast. To the right, the shore curved inland; and in the distance, as far as the eye could reach, presented to the view a sandy plain slightly varied by elevations,

and devoid of vegetation, save an occasional shrub oak or yellow pine.

The history of that coast has long been written in storms and human disaster. Now, however, it was at the close of a calm day; the gulls floated in the air, and fearlessly dropped down and dipped their white breasts in the measured waves. as they rolled in ceaseless succession against the shore; and the line of hazy blue which bounded the reach of vision in the distance over the water, looked like the entrance into fairy-land.

Having noted the several impressive points in the prospect, the mind of Mistress Warwick, as is customary with the aged, reverted to other days and other scenes connected with her early life. She recurred to merry England; and, aided by a clouded recollection, the enchantment which distance lends to objects, and the faithful predilections of a first love, which fasten our hearts to our father-land, wherever and whatever it may be, she spoke in glowing terms of the beauty, and wealth, and splendor of the mother-country. She dwelt on the garden-like appearance of its whole extent; the beauty of its hills, and vales, and rivers, and sea-girdled shores; its trellised cottages and frowning castles; the magnificence of its cities; the grandeur of its aristocracy, its nobles, its prelates, and its king; with all which America presented but a poor comparison.

"In fine, Charles," continued the good lady, as the sea-fowl circled and screamed around her head, "the very birds here are quite a different affair from what they are in the old country. They are nothing so fine in their plumage, nor so sweet in their songs."

Charles ventured to suggest that a comparison between the notes of the European nightingale and the American sea-mew was hardly appropriate.

"But," continued Mistress Warwick, "I have recently thought that the domestic fowls of this country even are not

to be compared in size or beauty with those of Britain; and the fruits and trees, I feel very certain, are quite inferior."

"'Mother," said Warwick, kindly, "England is a noble country, without a doubt; and if it be at all necessary to your comfort, we will go there. You know I have not so great a love for lords and kings as some, having never been much accustomed to them; still there are many things across the water I should be glad to see; and were it otherwise, if to go will add to your happiness, it will also add to mine."

"I very well know that, my child," returned the matron; "but still, at my age, I am doubtful of the propriety of undertaking so long a voyage. There are many things, too, in the Colonies I should regret to leave; and after all, England might not seem to me now as it did in olden times, and perhaps it is better that I should have it to think of, as memory brings it before me, than to find it changed, as other things have changed. But see, Charles, what an alteration there is in the sky! I fear we shall get a storm."

Truly, while this brief conversation was in progress, dark, wavy clouds had been sweeping up the eastern horizon, the wind had sensibly freshened; and there was that tense, and at the same time tremulous, feel of the air which betokens strife in the elements. Warwick hastened his companion to the shelter of the house.

Chapter Six.

HANDIWORK OF THE OCEAN. A SHIPWRECK THROWS SOME NOBLE FOREIGNERS INTO THE READER'S SOCIETY. THE LADY VIOLA.

"Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides."

HAVING placed his charge in safety, our young soldier betook himself again to the cliffs, to watch the storm which he felt confident was approaching. The black clouds were spreading over the horizon like squadrons of armed men; and night rushed on the earth, as though the sky were suddenly hung with a curtain. The shadows of darkness came like rolling waves quickly succeeding each other, and so distinct that they seemed almost sensible to the touch. As yet there was no rain; but the winds were moaning in fitful and threatening gusts, and the great ocean complained and trembled like a frightened child.

If there be such a thing as fascination in nature, it would seem to be experienced in those awful moments of preparation which precede the bursting of a tempest. Warwick stood upon the cliffs, and bared his head and bosom to the winds. Gradually the low-muttering thunder gathered strength, and deeper and nearer burst in rapid succession, until flash and report were simultaneous, and the explosions were of such force as to jar the rocks on which he was standing. The lightnings played around him like wild, spectral horses breathing fire and smoke. He felt their warm breath on his face, and the subtile fluid in his veins; and a sickening faintness came

over him. But he felt no fear: he was spell-bound. For an instant the entire landscape would be lighted up with more than the brilliancy of the sun, and again as suddenly shut in with a darkness as black as that of the caves of Erebus. The sea, he perceived, had already become lashed into a fury. The winds swept over it with the power of the fiercest hurricane, molding it at its will into every form of wild and fantastic beauty.

But such violence could not long endure; and as the wind lulled, the rain came down in torrents. The thunder was less incessant, and the descending floods seemed to obey its mandate. They would slacken, as though the great mysterious forces of nature were arranging their batteries for a fresh onset. Then would come the discharge again—a startling, jarring peal, a sublime, terrible voice for the night; the momentary flash would show the clouds rent and flying, and the water would rush to the earth as though driven by some tremendous engine of the sky.

But the hurricane had evidently reached its height, and was abating. During the fall of rain, Warwick had found a convenient shelter in a little lookout-box, perched on the height of the cliffs; and now, satisfied with the displays of the night, he was about seeking the protection of the inn, when his ear caught the report of a gun on the ocean. It was repeated; and as the lightning shed a broad illumination over the waste of waters, he discovered a ship under bare poles, at no great distance from the shore, and driving at a rapid rate directly toward the rocks which lined the beach. He lost no time in conveying the intelligence to the hotel.

The publican, a square-built, weather-beaten man, with the air and manners of one who had followed the sea, received the announcement with a stolidity bordering on indifference. There was a slight twinkle in his eye, however, as though the intelligence was not altogether unpleasant to him, and drawing a brand from the blazing wood-fire on the hearth, he passed

out through a side door. A moment after, Warwick was startled at the report of a cannon, so near the house as to jar it and rattle the glass in the windows. This was immediately followed by the whizz and glare of a bevy of rockets; and these in their turn by a bonfire, which seemed to burst into being without hands, on the cliffs, and blazed up into a broad column of fire which could be seen for many miles. But the publican knew what he was about. These were intended as signals, both to encourage the endangered vessel, and to gather the scattered inhabitants of the region to the coast. He then collected his retainers, and with Warwick proceeded to the shore.

The storm had ceased, save that the wind was still blowing freshly. The clouds were flashing a parting salute, and fleeing in broken masses from the sky. All was fair, and fragrant, and hopeful, except the writhing ocean, and the disabled ship, with her freight of life. At a glance it was evident that she must go ashore, and equally certain that no boat could live in such a sea.

Warwick, with a trepidation that indicated little familiarity with such scenes, inquired if nothing could be done to rescue the exposed wretches.

"Nothing," answered the landlord. "Their only hope is in Heaven and their boats, when the ship strikes."

Meanwhile, as the dying flashes of lightning afforded glimpses of the vessel, her decks were discovered crowded with human beings in every attitude of exertion and despair. The gathering wreckers on the cliffs shouted to encourage them, and a faint response came up from the deep, which sounded like a muffled wail, rather than a voice of hope.

"There is a channel," said the publican, "if they understand the shore, and can keep their craft in it. They are threading it," continued he, as the vessel for a moment was visible, stoutly struggling in the midst of the breakers, with

a single strip of canvas set, and apparently answering her helm.

But the courage which the landlord's remark inspired was fated to be suddenly dissipated. There was a crash out on the sea, and shrieks came up from the waves—those shrieks of agony and terror which mortals only utter at the moment of sudden and decisive fate, and though faint to the ears of those who were watching on the cliffs, they were distinct enough to reach their hearts, and to curdle them.

"Let us to the boats!" exclaimed Warwick, stepping forward.

"Stop! young man," said the publican, laying his heavy hand on the youth's shoulder. "You rush to your own destruction without a chance of helping them. Our boats would not live a minute in such a surf. It is no ways likely that the ship will go to pieces at once, if she has struck; and the water is every moment getting more calm. See, she is still erect!"

He pointed with his finger to the vessel now again visible, at less than a quarter of a mile from the shore; still erect, as he said, but beating heavily against the rocks, and staggering beneath the force of the waves, which at every swell broke over her. Few persons were now to be seen on her decks. They had been swept overboard, or had fled for security below.

How terrible under such circumstances is suspense! For hours, a period almost interminable, it must have seemed to those on the stranded ship, there was little change in the posture of affairs. The party on shore watched and waited, not wholly without hope, while the other wailed, and wept, and prayed in almost utter despair. The friendly moon, meanwhile, having escaped from the flying masses of clouds in the west, looked out with her calm, encouraging face over the frightful scene. It was quite evident that the sea was fast becoming composed. The publican congratulated his associ-

ates on this favorable phase in the desperate circumstances of the night; but the words were scarcely out of his mouth before it became equally evident that the ship was sinking. Those who had sought safety in the cabins now rushed again on deck. Shrieks, heart-rending cries for help, filled the air; and the wildest confusion reigned in the ill-starred vessel. One small portion alone of the deck seemed still under any command; and from this, very soon, a boat was let down, filled with human beings. Contrary to the expectation of those who were watching from the cliffs, it was safely launched, and the moment it touched the water was fortunately borne by a swell clear of all contact with the ship. Both the wind and the waves conspired to drive it rapidly onward in the direction of the shore; but as is almost unavoidable in periods of such disaster, the little craft was quite overloaded, even for a smooth sea. Under present circumstances, its living to reach land could be considered little short of a miracle.

The publican and his companions watched the experiment with great interest; and familiar as they were with the horrors of the sea, when they perceived that several females were on board the little boat, which in its sturdy efforts to sustain its precious freight, seemed breasting the billows like a thing of life, they could no longer restrain their enthusiasm. They rushed below in a body to the beach, and into the water to their waists, that they might be in a position, if possible, to aid in the rescue.

"She stands it well," said the landlord, "and God send that she reach the shore in safety, and that we may yet have a happy finish to this rough night."

"Amen!" ejaculated his companions, urging themselves still farther into the brine.

Warwick, in his dismay, was speechless. At one moment the little craft would be seen riding buoyant on the summit of a wave, and the next she would be lost to sight in the trough

of the ocean. These last, to the young soldier, were periods of fearful alarm.

"Good God!" exclaimed the publican, in a voice betokening the utmost horror, as the boat remained a little longer than usual hidden from view, "it is all over with them, I think."

"No, no," quickly returned Warwick, finding his voice in the excitement of hope, as his watchful eye for an instant caught a glimpse of the missing object, "she still rides. Courage! courage!" he shouted at the top of his voice; and the cry was taken up and helped on by the utmost stretch of sound which the lungs of fifty hardy wreckers could compass.

It was heard; and a slow, long "Hoa, thanks!" came over the water in reply, and in a voice betokening any thing but despair.

Indeed, the boat stood the rough sea to a miracle, and ere long she had made so much headway that those on board of her were pretty distinctly visible. She seemed under the guidance of a master spirit, a tall, powerful man, who, as they neared the shore, stood erect in the stern and coolly governed her movements. Of him the hardy coast-men expressed their admiration in unmeasured terms.

But few rods now intervened between the struggling craft and the shore, and Warwick and his companions were already exulting in her safety, when, as it seemed, she slightly touched a concealed rock which turned her from her course The tall stranger applied his strength and skill to right her, but helm and oar proved powerless against the force of the swell which struck and overwhelmed her. She filled, and sunk instantly.

Warwick plunged into the foaming brine, and was followed by the publican and the boldest of his men. They pushed forward vigorously, and soon were in the midst of the struggling wretches. Warwick found himself in contact with the tall helmsman who had attracted his attention, and who,

bearing a female on his shoulder, struck back the waves with his giant limbs as he urged his way toward land. With a single glance—though the meeting was at night in the sea—which seemed to say that he recognized a kindred spirit in the young soldier, he placed the lady in his arms, and himself turned back again to the rescue of others.

A few moments with Warwick, moments of singular interest in the object he held to his bosom, sufficed to bear her to a place of safety, and he also was again breasting the waves. In the first surge that swept over him he came in severe collision with the body of a man, who had already ceased struggling and had yielded himself and the aspirations of this world at length quietly into the hands of his fate. Warwick dragged him ashore, and as he bore him up the beach out of the reach of the waves, he could not but remark, by the light of the beacon still blazing aloft on the rocks, the extreme richness of his dress and the foreign aspect of every thing about him. His fingers were circled with heavy rings, and a chain of great value and a glittering star flashed on his breast. The young soldier placed him in the care of those on shore, and as he was giving some hasty directions for his recovery, had the satisfaction to perceive that animation was already returning. Attracted by a voice of low but deep distress, he discovered but few paces away, supported by her women as she stood dripping on the sand, the lady whom he had previously aided to rescue. In the haste and confusion of the moment he had merely remarked that she was young and fair; now, touched by her sorrow, he took her by the hand and addressed her a few inspiring words of comfort and of hope. She replied by sobs and a soft and liquid utterance in a foreign tongue, which though quite capable of conveying a distinct impression to the mind, as a combination of words, was entirely unintelligible to her listener. The American did not fail to perceive, however, as the light flashed down from

the rocks, that her eyes were large and lustrous, and her complexion, though pallid with fright, pure as the snows of his own north. He had hardly completed these slight observations, when, with an exclamation of delight, the fair stranger sprung past him and threw herself into the arms of an elderly gentleman, who, also dripping from the brine, now approached, supported, as he slowly toiled up the beach, by the athletic helmsman.

Meanwhile the landlord and his men had done good service. Of those who were in the boat when she capsized, some had saved themselves by their skill as swimmers, others had been thrown ashore by the waves, but more had been plucked from graves in the yawning sea by the bravery of those who had so fearlessly gone to their rescue, until it appeared probable from a hasty count and comparison of recollection that the whole number were safely assembled on the beach. Thereupon the party, sad but rejoicing, though several of them were in an extremely exhausted condition, dragged their way, by the aid of the hardy wreckers, up the cliffs to the hotel.

The night by this time was well advanced. During the more pressing peril of the boat the ship was lost sight of, and now, as the first dawn of morning came in from the east, covering all things with a gossamer mantle of gray, she was discovered lodged and stationary on the rocks. Her helpless crew by frequent cries for succor gave evidence of their continued preservation; but as the danger of navigating the intermediate stretch of sea with the small shore-craft was hourly becoming less, it was nearly certain that their safety was best consulted by a still farther delay. In the course of a few hours, however, they were relieved from their perilous situation, and a happy termination was thus given to a night of fearful terror, not a life throughout the whole affair having been lost.

The vessel proved to be a Spanish galleon bound for New York. Her first officer, Captain Pandriel, was a small, dark personage, with enormous whiskers and mustaches, and on the whole a man of no very prepossessing appearance; but the one to whom most deference was paid was the elderly gentleman already noticed, who to a very decided military air and figure, added an agreeable and commanding presence. As soon as the safety of all was ascertained, this gentleman, accompanied by the courageous helmsman, sought out our hero, and courteously taking him by the hand, addressed him in very good English some words of thanks, in which it was quite evident, however, that aristocratic formality, deeply awakened emotion, and a want of familiarity with the language, together, formed a serious impediment in the way of his undertaking.

"I am informed, gentle sir," said he, "by my friend Johnson here, that I am indebted to you for the preservation of the life of my daughter, the Lady Viola Torrillo, from the horrors of our late shipwreck, the particulars of which I beg you to excuse me if I do not now recall; and also for the rescue, at the same time, from the waves, in an insensible condition, of my much esteemed friend, Don Ferdinand de Cassino. In what way, I pray you, brave sir, can we most satisfactorily to you express our gratitude, if we can not hope in any degree to cancel the weighty obligations under which we rest? Money, sir, is dross by the side of life;" and as he said this he took a purse from the hand of Johnson.

But the Spaniard did not offer to present it. He readily understood the feeling of wounded pride which at once mantled the face of the young American, who hastened to express in return the ample satisfaction he had received for the aid he had been able to render in the acts themselves, and to assure Don Manuel Torrillo that for the safety of his daughter, at least, his principal thanks were due to his companion, the individual by his side.

"Ah!" said Don Manuel, with a brightening and tearful eye, "I have been so often indebted to your countryman, Mr. Michael Johnson, for favors both great and small, that I no longer find it convenient on every separate occasion to express my emotions or my thanks. But this once I may be allowed to do so, for last night me, also, did he force back to life, dragging me even out of the wide-open jaws of death itself."

Thus saying he threw his arms around the plain, weather-beaten man before him, and pressed him warmly to his breast. A few moments having been given to this natural outbreak of feeling, the Spaniard again took Warwick's hand, and silently placing on his finger a valuable gem, he led him into the presence of his daughter.

The Lady Viola was a pale, dark-haired girl. She was very pale and languid in her appearance, though both the color and the lassitude might have been much heightened by the sufferings she had so lately undergone. She did not attempt to express directly what she, nevertheless, very evidently felt, but contented herself with a modest utterance of her thankfulness in Spanish, which her father rendered with a mixture of pride and parental satisfaction to the young American. The interview was short; but Warwick as he retired was inly sensible, though he did not stop to analyze the feeling, that the large liquid eyes of the daughter of Spain, as they rested on him, had sent their subtile influences through him, and stirred electrical currents within which had never been awakened before.

Don Ferdinand de Cassino, on finding himself face to face with the man who had saved his life, poured out his thanks with a fluency of rhetoric which would admit of no stay. He hung a purse of gold on the arm of his overwhelmed benefactor, and insisted on his retaining it, until the young American driven to the wall, and at length recovering his presence of mind and his tongue, was compelled to take refuge in the

conscious dignity of his character and position. Elevating his tall and graceful person to the utmost, he politely thanked the Spaniard, but proudly declined to avail himself of his generosity. Don Ferdinand found himself silenced and surprised. He was evidently incapable of comprehending the young soldier, but Michael Johnson, who was present, regarded the transaction with a gratification which he did not attempt to conceal.

Chapter Seven.

THE WRECKERS. A NIGHT-FIRE UPON THE BEEF.

"The panther leaped to the front of his lair,
And stood with a foot up and snuffed the air."

THE inhabitants of that portion of New Jersey at the period of which we write were the progenitors of the later interesting dwellers on that coast, and possessed, even at that early day, most of those inestimable qualities as wreckers which their sons have since so admirably exhibited.

On the day following the night when the galleon was stranded, there was a constant ingathering of the people round about, attracted by the exciting intelligence of a ship ashore, which seemed to have been conveyed inland, and up and down the coast, to every hill and valley, and into every fisherman's hut with a facility truly surprising. By noon a large number had congregated, mostly hale, weather-beaten men, clad in homespun, and of rough and unprepossessing exterior, but who, from their habits of exposure and familiarity with the dangers of the coast, were prepared to render efficient service in the work now in hand. It had been determined to unload the vessel, as much for the safety of her valuable cargo, as from the hope that by lightening her she might again be got afloat at some favorable period of high tide, and the work was already bravely under way. With the assistance of all these fresh arrivals, each one of whom at once

turned in without waiting to be solicited, as though the business of clearing the wreck was but a sort of pastime, by night a large portion of the cargo of the galleon had been removed safely to the cliffs, and thence to the outhouses of the hotel, or secured under canvas coverings, which it had been found necessary to erect, not only for this purpose, but also for the accommodation of the sailors, and the very numerous retinue of the two Spanish gentlemen.

Warwick was well aware of the unenviable reputation of the inhabitants of this coast, and early took occasion to place the Spaniards on their guard. But whatever might be the character of the people, but little it seemed, with a reasonable vigilance, should be apprehended from them, as the forces of the wrecked vessel altogether numbered a hundred and fifty well-armed men : and Don Manuel smiled, and Don Ferdinand laughed aloud with scorn, at the idea of damage to themselves or their goods from the untrained and unarmed rabble among whom they had fallen. Some little pilfering of small articles in the transfer of the goods to their receptacles on shore would occur of course, but this was the utmost, in their opinion, that was to be feared.

Early in the evening, refreshments from the ship's stores were bountifully distributed among the throng, and all those who had done service were liberally rewarded and dismissed. But they showed no inclination to depart. They loitered around the grounds and among the goods, laughing and cracking hard jokes on the Spaniards, all the harder, indeed, from the consciousness that they were not understood. At length a few of them became boisterous, were irritable, and assumed a dissatisfied air, as though the strangers had wronged them. But as the evening wore away they fell off in small parties, and by midnight few, save those who belonged to the establishment of the publican, remained. All became quiet. The winds were at rest, the sea was still and smooth, and the ship-

wrecked and tired sons of Spain cast thus, by a cruel fortune, on the inhospitable shores of the New World, disposed themselves to sleep.

At this period there came a cry from the sentinels that the galleon was on fire; and the worn-out wretches who had but just relaxed their limbs, and embalmed their senses in the calm of slumber, sprung to their feet again, rushed out upon the night, and turned their dim, bewildered eyes on the ocean. The flames were evidently but just kindled, and by their light the forms of men were to be seen skulking about on her decks. Captain Pandriel was confounded, for until this moment he had indulged the strongest hopes of saving his gallant ship. He rushed to the cliffs; and as his men gathered around him he gave full vent to his rage, and called down on the perpetrators of the dastardly deed the direst imprecations. The sailors echoed his half-coherent ravings, but as the fire made headway, and spread into different parts of the vessel, anger was at last fairly overmastered by grief: they became mute and motionless, like staring statues, save that real tears trickled down their swarthy faces. It was indeed the funeral pile of their dearest, and to some of them of their oldest, friend.

Don Manuel beheld this rascally proceeding of the Jerseymen with less apparent feeling, but his movements were more effective. He ordered a gun which had been taken from the wreck to be stationed on the cliffs, and soon the shot went rattling among the decks and timbers of the galleon. Not anticipating a salute of this nature, the pirates were taken by surprise. They dropped their plunder and fled for their boats; but two of them at least were stopped in their retreat. They were seen to fall back on the deck, there to await the approach of the fire themselves had helped to kindle. The boats pushed off toward a clump of islands lying a little to the south. The gun was again pointed, and this time by Don Manuel

himself; and as the shot struck, one of them was capsized, and every soul on board went down. The other boats, aided by the increased distance and the darkness, escaped.

The flames, meanwhile, progressed with fearful rapidity, seizing on the pitch and other combustibles plentifully at hand, and soon extended throughout the body of the vessel. Then they burst upon the upper decks, and still mounting aloft, leaped from rope to rope and spar to spar, and enveloped the towering masts, until the whole ship to its utmost height was a body of fire. The night was dark and calm; hardly a breath stirred the heavens; and the flames arose to their utmost altitude in an unwaving column. The dense, black smoke from the burning pitch piled itself still above, and slowly rolled off over the ocean. Soon the smaller spars began to fall, and ere long the masts tottered, and one by one plunged over into the sea. Within a very brief period from the time the fire was discovered, the splendid four-decked galleon, which for many years had done good service—had safely borne most princely freights of ingots, silks, and spices in the commerce between Spain and her colonies—lay a smoldering, blackened, and shapeless hulk on the water.

During this sudden and exciting scene, all those to whom the duty had been assigned of standing sentry over the goods, as well as the others, had rushed to the cliffs. Nothing, however, was discovered to be wrong with their respective charges until morning; then, indeed, it was perceived that one of their most valuable depôts had been rifled of a large portion of its contents, and thus the entire plot of the wreckers, which, it must be confessed, had been laid with great shrewdness, became apparent.

On the discovery of the robbery, no one expressed greater surprise and regret than the publican. Indeed, his rage was quite beyond bounds at the occurrence, which had taken place immediately under his nose, and on his own grounds. He

mounted his horse, and spent some hours in an endeavor to track the plunderers; but his efforts failed. The goods were never recovered.

It may surprise some to know that, within a week after the Spanish party had taken its departure, many of the most valuable articles they had lost were openly exposed to observation in the house of the landlord himself. But should any one conclude that this worthy individual risked his own life to save these strangers from drowning that he might afterward rob them, he would do him great injustice. The conduct of the publican but illustrates a common principle of every-day affairs. Men help each other one day, and steal from one another the next, according to the impulse of the hour. Whatever way we turn, robbery, legal or illegal—by unjust prices, frauds, or pitfalls of the law—meet us at every hand. Charity and love also abound; but those of us who most strive to do well, fall often and disgracefully before temptation; while it can not be doubted that the highwayman, should he discover his victim in imminent and unexpected danger at the moment of his assault upon his life, would rescue him even at the peril of his own. Thus are weakness and strength, selfishness and generosity, the angel and the devil, commingled in mankind.

In the present condition of society, notwithstanding the advancement of the last half century, with which we flatter and console ourselves, good and evil are not yet assorted; neither have we yet arrived at a point where, as a race, we perceive with any clear discrimination the difference between these two conflicting elements. But a better day is dawning; the morning of it is even now flooding us with its golden light, in which the past and the future, and all needed principles and things, will appear clearly to our vision; when mankind will acknowledge a common brotherhood; and man will learn what love for his neighbor means. The next ten years seem likely

to do more to illuminate and improve the world than the preceding decade of centuries.

Warned by the destruction of their vessel and the plunder of their property, the Spaniards determined to lose no time in effecting their escape from the neighborhood of men so much more cruel than the sea. Don Manuel and his daughter, therefore, at once accompanied Charles and Mistress Warwick to New York, where they were very shortly joined by the rest of the Spanish party, together with such effects and merchandise from the rich lading of the galleon as were finally saved from the rapacity of the Barnegat oystermen.

Chapter Eight.

THE SPANIARDS IN NEW YORK.

"Ye men of Spain, hurrah!"

AS gentlemen of rank, who had suffered by stress at sea, and been cast perforce on the hospitality of the Colonies, the noble Spaniards were cordially received at New York. Especially when it was whispered about, as by some means soon happened, that Don Manuel Torrillo was an officer of considerable renown, and stood high in the esteem and confidence of the Spanish crown, was he treated with singular tokens of respect. Even the Governor of the Colony of New York and the city functionaries took every occasion to court his acquaintance, and to express their great consideration for him in a marked and public manner.

Indeed, simply as a man, the noble Spaniard furnished in his person a very favorable specimen of the race. Tall and well set, his bust and limbs were full, and fashioned after the most classic model. His complexion, to be sure, was southern, but it was pure, and relieved by his still darker hair; while his large black eyes and fine, but not too heavy, upper head, formed a fitting base and accompaniment to the frank and benevolent expression of his countenance. This advantageous personal appearance was well sustained by his deportment. In his intercourse with the citizens of New York, Don Manuel was dignified but cordial, and exhibited, in a very favorable manner, the stores of a well-balanced and cultivated mind.

Such, however, in most respects, was not his friend and companion. Don Ferdinand de Cassino was still a young man, having as yet passed his majority but by a very few years. He was smaller in stature and thinner in person than his senior, and though certainly well educated, and not lacking in intelligence, from some not very easily defined cause, he was unpleasing. At first glance it was apparent that frills and mustaches were to him matters of very grave concern, and yet that frills and mustaches were nothing, only as connected with Don Ferdinand himself. But if haughty and selfish, he was, nevertheless, strictly a gentleman, according to the established code of the world, and as a foreign nobleman and the friend of Don Manuel he was everywhere well received and often courted; while there were those, and the number was not small, who regarded the obvious blemishes in his character as so many enviable certificates of the chevalier's high breeding.

But aside from the consideration of rank and personal endowments, there was much of novelty to the New Yorkers in having among them a brace of undoubted Spanish grandees; and these, not to do discredit to their name and country, had taken an elegant mansion in a fashionable part of the city, and fitted it up with great splendor, where they were surrounded by their bustling menials, whose numbers and servile devotion to their superiors gave to the establishment an appearance of state to which the colonists in their simplicity were little accustomed, and some, it may be, were attracted in their attentions by the beauty and gentle bearing of the child-like Lady Viola.

It will readily be supposed that the intercourse between the Warwicks and the Spanish party was soon established on the most familiar footing. Indeed, as they were thrown together at the moment when the latter first touched the American shore, and together journeyed to New York, so now, although

occupying separate domestic establishments, they were hardly more apart. The Lady Viola, during the late distressing occurrences, had learned to cling to Mistress Warwick with a sort of filial affection; while Charles Warwick, if not attached to the young lady's father by a bond precisely similar, found himself, nevertheless, deeply interested in the person and fortunes of that noble gentleman, who cordially and warmly reciprocated the sentiment.

Besides Johnson the American, whose plain common sense never wearied, and who, from some cause, was admitted to an equality in the house of the Spaniards, to which his sphere in life could not be held to entitle him, there were, appertaining to that establishment, a fat, jovial priest, known as Signor Antonio, and a grave follower of Esculapius, called Doctor Oquetos, both of whom were much addicted to learned and instructive conversation.

But, notwithstanding the various attractions of the male coterie daily to be found at the brilliant reception-rooms of these foreign gentlemen, increased, as they often were, by the addition of half the learning and logic of the town, Charles Warwick, with alarming frequency, became forgetful of them all, and on coming to himself would discover that he was by the side of the Lady Viola, and that he had been listening to her soft guitar, and softer voice and broken English, and looking, all too deeply, into her sweet eyes. He would color and correct his error, but only to repeat it. Possessed, as he was, of an inquiring mind, it will create no surprise, under the circumstances of the case, that this young and ardent American ere long was seized with a laudable ambition to become acquainted with the Spanish language, as well as endowed with a wonderful faculty in expounding the mysteries of his own tongue. What could Viola do but become his instructress and pupil?

It was now that the tables became strewn with the mingled

literature and classics of the two nations; grammars, lexicons, and other rudimentary books, with Shakespeare and Lopez, Milton and Cervantes. Nor were Don Manuel and Ferdinand uninterested spectators of the wondrous labors which succeeded. The former had long been familiar with Englishmen and English literature, and admired both, and made no secret of his admiration. Don Ferdinand, on the contrary, though ever ready to pay lavish court to British rank and power, in his heart reviled Englishmen and all their works. With him there was no country but Spain, no people but the Spanish, and no language fit for the poet, the historian, the orator, or the gentleman, but the Castilian. And yet, from some unexplained motive, he very shortly joined Warwick and the Lady Viola in their studies. No lesson was conned which did not witness the presence of the chevalier, augmenting the party into a trio, without particularly enhancing the interest, at least to the other male member of the class. Nor was the harmony of the sittings increased by the addition. Before, all flowed smoothly as a summer sea; now, critical questions were raised at every turn, and the Spaniard seemed bent on measuring his scholarship and powers with those of the young American. From these conflicts he did not always escape unscathed. Though well schooled, his impetuosity led him sometimes to take his ground without properly measuring his distances, and a disastrous overthrow was the result. In the end he was taught a valuable lesson of prudence, and compelled to respect the rival whom, had it not been for the deep obligation under which he lay to him, he would have openly affected to despise.

Chapter Nine.

WARWICK FINDING HIMSELF IN LOVE, SEEKS RELIEF IN POETRY.

"We call thee hither, entrancing power!
Spirit of love! spirit of bliss!"

NOTWITHSTANDING the devotion of Warwick to the study of the Spanish, and of the Lady Viola and Don Ferdinand to the English, these pursuits were not suffered to interfere with the free enjoyment of the good society of the city. The presence of the strangers had infused new spirit into the élite of the town; and calls and compliments, parties and balls, intermixed with rides to Brooklyn and Hoboken, or other rural sites or points of interest, followed each other in a continuous round.

Weeks thus passed away; and however much Warwick was fascinated with the life he led, he very shortly discovered that it, too, had its drawbacks. He perceived that there was indeed some serious cause of disturbance between himself and Don Ferdinand de Cassino. As yet he had not stopped to inquire what it was. For himself, he was quite certain that, aside from dragging that gentleman from the surf somewhat roughly, he had always treated him with the utmost courtesy and respect; indeed, he had been jealous of himself in that particular, and had even subjected his inner man to a severe scrutiny, in order to make sure that he had given the chevalier full credit for all the good qualities he possessed; and though constantly annoyed by Ferdinand's presence at his elbow, when-

ever he had particular reasons for wishing him elsewhere, and especially when he was in conversation with Viola, he was certain he had borne it all with exemplary patience, and had exhibited in return no word or look of displeasure. But Don Ferdinand was not so well schooled. He soon became irritable, then captious, and finally morose. It was easy to perceive that a positive rupture was impending.

A little reflection was sufficient to expose to Warwick the secret of the Spaniard's conduct. He discovered that he himself, however well he might succeed in concealing it, was particularly nettled whenever that gentleman came between him and the Lady Viola; and furthermore, that an exchange of position produced a similar effect on Don Ferdinand, which that individual lacked either the tact or the inclination to disguise. From this discovery, or, to speak mathematically, from these premises, the corollary unavoidably followed, that, for some reason, the society of the fair Andalusian was very agreeable to both of them. As for himself, he had found from sad experience that his lessons were neglected, unless his excellent instructress was by his side to prompt him on to effort; that in her absence he forgot his books, and sat and mused, and drew pictures in the air, of what he hardly knew, or cared, if she were there. It was thus that he could restore her to his presence; and without her he felt lost, adrift on the sea of life, without a helm or anchor. All young men, especially imaginative young men, until disappointment clips the wings of hope, dream dreams of glorious fabric. To them the future is a realm of light, and love, and beauty. No landscape greets the sight but what has flowers, and running streams, and birds, and skies without a cloud. A gentle rain may fall to wet the grass, and scatter pearls upon the violets and diamonds on the leaves; but storms do never come.

Charles Warwick was a dreamer of this sort, and now more than ever; and as he dreamed, each scene that passed before

his view had one peculiar feature. No garden walk, no hill, no tangled wood, no future home for him, no point of time from youth to helpless age, moved over the mental screen, and he a part, but Viola, too, was there. He looked yet on to spheres of better hope, where angel forms float in the blue serene or walk unfading fields: she still was there, an angel by his side, a part of his own life, to love, to cheer—her hand in his, her soft eyes blessing him.

But as he dreamed and quaffed unconsciously draughts of bewitching sweetness, and spent his days in purple groves fanned by the perfumed air, where love made all the music, and changed all shapes to forms of joy and beauty, to others he often seemed strange and sad. Mistress Warwick was alarmed, until she guessed the cause.

As they arose from the breakfast-table one morning, at which the young gentleman had already exhibited some startling signs of aberration of intellect, Mistress Warwick inquired if they should not ride.

"I think she would," replied he, gazing into vacancy. "The day bids fair."

"We will call, then, and take her up," added the lady smiling. "Which way shall we drive?"

"Any way you like, mother; I am not particular—the moon is up, the silver stars are set."

"Did you stop at the Post Office when you were out, my dear?" said the lady.

"No, mother," he replied; "what would you like? a duck, or a nice fish, for dinner?"

"Why, Charles!" exclaimed the good matron, "how very absent you are! You quite alarm me."

"Why, what did I say, and what did you inquire about, mother?"

"I asked about the Post Office, my son, and not about the market at all."

"Oh, ah!" stammered Charles. "My wits must have been wool-gathering indeed. This studying Spanish, since I am out of the habit of study, is confusing me, I think."

"You must not study so hard, my son," said the lady kindly. "But are you quite certain that it is the language?" and she looked sharply into his eyes. "Is it not rather the Spanish lady, my dear?"

Warwick blushed like a girl.

"Do not feel abashed, my son," continued this ancient maiden, in a voice hardly above a whisper, and which barely escaped being tremulous, but at the same time was peculiarly distinct; "the feeling is a holy one."

"You have experienced it, then, mother?"

"Who that had a heart ever escaped?" said the lady quickly, and with increasing agitation. "It is the law of our being; but it runs not always smoothly." She paused for a moment, and then added: "Viola is worthy, but have a care for yourself, Charles. I see trouble in the distance; and dearly as I love you, I do not bid you shun it. Be wary of Don Ferdinand. Be prudent; but with manliness and strength, and God's blessing, go on, and win the prize you covet."

The aged matron closed with the apparent inspiration of a pythoness, and sinking into a chair covered her face with her hands. Remarkable for little else save the strength of her affections, it had been many years since she had exhibited an energy at all comparable to this. Warwick was surprised, and pleased, and grieved. He perceived that she had scanned his case—the present and the future—with an eye far steadier and clearer than his own. He was glad to understand his position, to have the floating visions of his mind reduced to form. He perceived that he had found a confidant and wise adviser where least he had expected it; but he was grieved to know that one so dear to him, through long, long years of loneliness, had nourished in her breast a fount of hidden sorrow. He

sat down beside her; and the young man, burdened with his first love, and the gray-haired woman, unbosomed themselves to each other.

The occasional rudenesses and belligerent glances of Don Ferdinand, latterly becoming more marked and frequent, had not escaped the observation of the Lady Viola; on the contrary, they had become to her a source of evident embarrassment. Sometimes, with the familiarity of an old friend, she would playfully check him; while with great discretion she divided her attention between the two gentlemen, and watchfully, but delicately, sought to palliate whatever unpleasant circumstances, at any time, might arise. Nothing else, save this irritability on the part of the Spaniard, had ever come to the knowledge of Warwick to lead him to suppose that that individual made any pretensions affecting in any manner the fortunes of the Lady Viola. True, he knew little about the private affairs of his foreign friends; and whatever he did know, they themselves had informed him. He had thus been told that Don Ferdinand de Cassino accompanied Don Manuel as *his* friend; and he found himself little inclined to suppose any thing further.

If any one has imagined for a moment, because our hero has shown himself apt and prudent, generous and brave; a youth guided in his ways by a conscious sense of integrity and right, that he was therefore above the common weaknesses of human nature, he has much mistaken him. We have confessed that in the short period of a few weeks he became nearly demented with love, and hardly knew it, until the probe of his experienced maiden-mother laid his bosom bare that he might see it. He had still another weakness of a graver cast. He was occasionally a devotee of the muses. He found feelings within himself crying aloud for utterance, and he gave them voice, as the unseen monitor directed.

Poetry has been called the language of passion. It is, more

properly, *the ideal of the real, and the real of the ideal, or embodiment of the spiritual.* It clothes the material world with new and undiscovered beauty, lifting common things up into sunshine and loveliness. It endows the immaterial, the intangible, with form and substance, that we may catch and hold it. Its office is to raise our thoughts and aspirations, to clear away the grossnesses which surround us, and set high standards up at which we all may aim.

But the world adjudges poetry a weakness; and in accordance with the sentiment, we are forced to say that Charles Warwick being in a mood favorable for the exhibition of his weak points, to his great subsequent perplexity and discomfort fell into it. On the morning of the day following his *éclaircissement* with his mother, on calling at the mansion of his friends, he unexpectedly found the Lady Viola alone. She received him with great cordiality, and he noticed with pleasure that a certain restraint too frequently observable in Don Ferdinand's presence had now entirely vanished. As he took her hand in his, she smiled, and turned her eloquent eyes inquiringly into his face.

It will surprise none of the initiated to know that Warwick found himself at the moment unable to reply to this familiar greeting. He therefore led her silently to a chair; and having arranged her dictionary and grammar for use, in his capacity of instructor, he gave her the following lines to translate into Spanish:

I love a bright and beaming eye,
  And thine, though ebon as the night,
Though round the dreamy lashes lie,
  Are like two gems of light.

Adown thy neck in raven rings
  The silken tresses wildly play;
While in thy voice the linnet sings
  His loving roundelay.

Thy brow is pure as ocean pearl,
  Thy cheeks are where the roses blow;
And 'tween thy red, red lips, sweet girl,
  Thy teeth are like the snow.

Thy form is sylph-like as the swan's
  When floating on the silver sea;
Thy step is like the graceful fawn's,
  As gentle and as free.

Sweet girl of Spain! Love, living love,
  In every feature barbs his dart;
The coursing shafts have struck a dove—
  His refuge is thy heart.

An hour was spent in the exercise of the translation, during which Warwick was troubled with hot and cold flashes alternately running over him, and found himself much afflicted with stammering; while the Lady Viola, as she closed the final stanza, rested her head gravely and thoughtfully on her hand.

Chapter Ten.

THE BALL AT GOVERNOR CLINTON'S.

"There was a voice of revelry by night."

IT was at a period of bland and balmy airs and clear skies that the lady of his Britannic Majesty's chief functionary at New York, issued cards of invitation for a grand gala. This festivity, it was understood, had been planned in special honor of those noble subjects of his Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain, who had been thrown by stress at sea on the hospitalities of the city. It was also equally understood that all the beauty and fashion of the town would be there, and that such display would be made as the city never had witnessed, and, probably, never would witness again. Great, therefore, was the anxiety for invitations; and as the entertainment had, in reality, been got up on an extensive scale, few who might be said to have any pretensions to such distinguished favor were ultimately disappointed; though Mrs. Pinch, the wife of a wealthy tobacconist, and Mrs. Blond, the lady of a retail fancy dry goods dealer, received their cards, for themselves and daughters, at the eleventh hour, when hope had almost drawn her last sigh, and time for due preparation of dress, had that important particular been neglected so long, was totally out of the question.

Early in the evening of the momentous day, carriages, mixed with occasional parties on foot, of those who resided near at hand, began to thread the avenues leading to the

Government House, within the walls of the Fort, on the site now occupied by the upper portion of the Battery, which was the residence of Governor Clinton. That distinguished personage and his lady, with their domestics, and a long train of servitors engaged for the occasion, were on the alert. What with extra exertions, scolding and storming, very much after the manner of other people, they had at length managed to get the affair arranged quite to their satisfaction; and by the time their guests began to arrive, calm as a summer morning, they were ready to receive them with smiles and compliments, after the most courtly fashion of the times.

For that night the Governor's mansion, from top to bottom, was gayly thrown open for the accommodation of his numerous guests; and the decoration of the rooms and grounds, to say the least, was brilliant and imposing. The walls were hung in festoons of evergreens and flowers, only broken by the drapery of gold and silver cloth, of crimson, green, and blue, which shaded the tall windows. Broad mirrors blazed among the fragrant wreaths which twined them, and threw back the light from costly chandeliers, whose many waxen candles, set in the branching arms, would have shone all too brightly for the eye but for the good green boughs and rare transparencies arranged to dim their luster. Massive plate, loaded with refreshments, meats, fruits, and condiments to tempt the palate, spices to heat and ices to cool, were disposed in magnificent profusion; while rich old wines sparkled in silver goblets, and choice exotic plants bloomed in Bohemian vases, and breathing their soft odors through the apartments, took captive the senses with their agreeable perfumes.

Soon the guests, in their richest and gayest costumes, were assembled; fair-haired girls and smiling matrons, the stripling, the soldier in his gaudy trappings, and the sage; and when music did its office to harmonize and enliven the feelings, and the eye of beauty had quickened as it will quicken

even the pulses of age, it was, indeed, a rare and bright assembly, speaking alone of the joyousness of life, without a thought of sorrow. While some mingled in the dance, others, in pairs, promenaded the labyrinthine rooms; others, still, lounged on the sofas, or reclined at their ease within the shadowy recesses of some sylvan and fantastic bower. Here, a party talked good-natured scandal, and made their remarks on those that passed them by; there, another discussed politics, philosophy, or religion; and there, a little apart from all the rest, a pair chatted polite and flippant nonsense or whispered of love.

"Oh! where are the Spanish grandees, pray?" said Mrs. Blond to Mrs. Pinch, as she seated herself beside that lady on a velvet sofa; "I am sure I have seen nothing of them yet."

"Why, how you talk, Mrs. Blond!" returned the complaisant Mrs. Pinch. "I supposed every body had seen them before this. I was introduced to them an hour ago. There, look! there is my Lord Don Manuel, talking with Mrs. Morgan; and yonder is my Lord Don Ferdinand Cossetto, as I think they call him, looking — yes, he's looking, and very sharply, too—at something."

Mrs. Pinch here changed her position a little, and by the aid of a very long neck, was able to satisfy her curiosity as to the point in doubt; when she continued:

"He is looking, Mrs. Blond, at Captain Warwick and the young Lady Torrillo, who are dancing together."

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mrs. Blond. "I wonder if those are the Spanish nobility there is so much talk about! Why, I thought they were black!"

"Well, they don't lack much of it," returned the good-natured Mrs. Pinch, with a laugh.

"The gentlemen are rather dark, but the lady, I am sure, is white enough," said Mrs. Blond. "I was very near her a

little while ago, and noticed her particularly, though I did not then know who she was."

"Her white has a little too much of an India-ink shading," said Mrs. Pinch. "She is very pale instead of very white."

"Not so very pale, neither," said Mrs. Blond; "now she is warmed up with exercise she has a fine glow on her cheeks. But what a beautiful cap she has on!"

"It is a sort of half turban, trimmed with orange-flowers and diamonds," said Mrs. Pinch. "That chit of the aristocracy of the Old World, Mrs. Blond, is decked out with jewels enough to-night to build and furnish a whole block of houses."

"Her eyes are her best jewels," said a gentleman, in a low tone, very near Mrs. Pinch; and that lady, turning, recognized in the speaker one who belonged to the *ton* of the New World, and who, she perceived, with a little party of fashionables, was sauntering past, and, doubtless, had overheard her last remark to Mrs. Blond. Presuming that they were occupied with the same subject of conversation, Mrs. Pinch, having an inquiring mind, took Mrs. Blond by the arm and followed after them.

When the two ladies arrived within hearing distance, it appeared that the gentleman whom Mrs. Pinch had recognized was speaking.

"Nonsense! nonsense!" said he. "Let us have no common-place strictures here, and on such a subject. I am quite in love with this fair lily of Andalusia, and am free to confess it. Her manner is simplicity itself; and the Oriental cut of her dress—though no connoisseur in female *fixables*—is to me, I acknowledge, a fascinating novelty. You must certainly, ladies, try to catch it and bring it into fashion in our good city, if you would hereafter hope to make any impression on our side of the house. What say you, Amelia?"

"Oh, if you lords of creation desire it, we have nothing to do but to submit," answered Amelia Clinton, a fair daughter

of the Governor, with bright auburn hair. "Here, Mr. Gates," she playfully continued, in an endeavor to cover the very slight tone of vexation which had marked her previous words; "this handkerchief would make a turban fit for an Ottoman princess, and you shall be tire-woman and bind it on my head. Come, now, let us see if you really have any taste in such matters."

"Excellent! excellent!" said Mr. Gates; and he proceeded to arrange the embroidered gossamer. "But where are the black curls that should dance beneath it, Amelia?"

The young lady's heart was now full.

"Are not auburn as pretty?" she whispered, while a tear in spite of her sprung to her eye.

"True, love," replied Mr. Gates, in the same low tone, brought suddenly to his senses on perceiving the pain he had inflicted. "You must forgive me; I only admire the one, while I love the other."

"And who can help admiring?" said Sir George Carlton, catching a single word of Mr. Gates' sentence. "Such faultless symmetry; such eyes; such lips!"

"You rogue! We have found you out," said Miss Sarah Grant, quickly, who was hanging on Sir George's arm. "You are the author of the lines in the "New York Journal!" Ha! ha! You need not deny it."

"What lines?" eagerly inquired both gentlemen at once.

"The lines addressed to the Lady Viola Torrillo, to be sure," replied Miss Grant, "which have made so much conversation in town to-day.

"I am always behind the times," said Sir George, with an air of real or pretended vexation. "I have not seen the "Journal" of to-day, neither have I heard any thing about the sublime affair you mention. The rascally newsboy missed me this morning, as usual. If Zenger don't reform his scamps, I will reform my name from his list; and that shall be my business

for to-morrow, if there is enough left of me to crawl to Stone Street after the exhausting felicity of to-night."

"I must correct your mistake, Sir George," said Mr. Gates, "as I noticed the "Journal" of to-day on your table this morning when I called at your rooms."

"How happens it, then, Gates," said Sir George, with a slight degree of petulance, "that you are as ignorant as myself in relation to this important subject, which seems to have agitated the town for the last nine hours or more ?"

"Oh, while with you we were both busy, you know, and I only glanced a moment at your paper. On returning home, I found my spaniel, Ponto, comfortably digesting mine in the yard, where the carrier had thoughtfully deposited it for his accommodation."

"On the hip, Mr. Gates, if you please," ejaculated Major Van Quirk, a short, band-box gentleman, with a self-satisfied chuckle. "Your servant was so very polite this morning in your absence as to oblige me with the loan of your paper for half an hour, when I perused the poem in question with much pleasure; and, indeed," feeling in his pocket, "beg pardon, but I find I have it still, and can accommodate you with a sight of the lines."

A burst of merriment followed this exposition of Major Van Quirk, which at once restored the good humor of all; and when it had ceased, that person proceeded to read from the "New York Journal" of that day the lines we have given at the close of the preceding chapter, which, under the tutorship of Charles Warwick, had furnished not an uninteresting exercise in the studies of the Lady Viola Torrillo.

When Major Van Quirk ceased reading, which duty he performed with a firmer emphasis, perhaps, than exactly became the time and place, each opened his mouth to speak. All remarks, however, were cut short, for as the little coterie moved from its posture of attention, each at once became

aware of a considerable accession to their numbers. Among the arrivals were Mrs. Pinch, Mrs. Blond, and Don Ferdinand de Cassino.

The Spaniard was evidently out of humor, and stood biting his lips with vexation, while a very threatening frown rendered his dark countenance still darker. Having broken over the cold and polite exterior which usually marked his demeanor, he requested, with some abruptness, to look at the newspaper. Mr. Gates, who had reclaimed it, politely handed it to him. Don Ferdinand read the song for himself, and meanwhile, a little reflection having restored him to his self-possession, he pronounced it pretty, and inquired in a careless tone of voice if the author was known.

"They say that Captain Warwick wrote it," replied the intelligent Mrs. Pinch.

Don Ferdinand gave a sudden start, and, with a deeply lowering brow, whirled on his heel to depart, when Mrs. Pinch, presuming on the valuable information she had communicated, and her acquaintance of an hour's standing, with great dexterity threw herself in before him, brought him to a stand, and introduced to him her friend and companion, Mrs. Blond.

The chevalier bowed low; his breeding was at stake; and smothering his own angry feelings for the time, he entered into conversation. The tart remarks of the well-informed Mrs. Pinch proved to have for him a peculiar charm, and in lively chat the three, to the great exultation of the ladies, promenaded the rooms. At length Mrs. Blond, in the innocence of her nature, exposed the fact that her husband was a tradesman, when the proud noble, presuming that the rank of the agreeable Mrs. Pinch was no better, unceremoniously shook them off. He could not, however, deprive them of the recollection of the honor they had enjoyed during the brief period they had passed in his society.

The night to Charles Warwick was one of absorbing interest. The Lady Viola Torrillo was there, full of animation and happiness, and evidently not less so when with him than in the society of others. Though it was certain that she gave him no exclusive attentions, still her demeanor toward him was of a kind to satisfy him, and though he saw that toward Don Ferdinand she was more solicitously particular, he yet felt there was a difference in his own favor. Each look and smile spoke an intelligible language to him, a language which though it had no tongue was understood by the heart.

The Lady Viola meanwhile passed among the throng the admired of all, and as ever the delight of her proud and affectionate father. Whether she sat, or walked, or danced, the eye of Don Manuel turned to her as to a magnet and followed her like the eye of a lover. He could not avoid hearing the praises that were lavished upon her, and so, as a compromise with himself, pronounced them the mere unmeaning homage of the lip, while he still permitted his ear to drink them in with pleasure. In truth his child was lovely. Still it is possible, nay, certain, that more perfect faces, according to the established notions of beauty, might have been found in that assembly, and cheeks of a deeper hue may be met with on any sunny day by the roadside. Her beauty was a combination of symmetry, expression, and action. Her form was faultless, and her attitudes and motions full of grace, but wholly unpretending. She had apparently reached that point in the cultivation of manner where the beginning and the end of the circle come together again, and meet in the union of the simplicity of the child with that of the thorough-bred woman. If there was any one feature more than another in which resided her power over the hearts of others, it was her eye—a full, liquid orb, which emitted its rays too softly to alarm by its superior brilliancy, and so only fascinated those on whom it fell. It was the window of her mind, where all

her thoughts were playing. It was such an eye as no clime, southern or northern, oft matures, radiant with light and love and soul, and dewy as the morning—an eye, the power of which, though it may not be told, some, alas, have felt.

But if Viola was fair, she seemed to know it not. Sh moved as though unconscious of the admiring eyes upon her, and glided away from the praises intended for her ear. Is it not the retiring and folded lily that we go out, through the meadow and by the streams, to seek, though all the flowers of the garden are at hand, courting with open smiles our notice and our love?

Young as was Charles Warwick, and of a temperament to feel the full force of the master passion when aroused—and acknowledging to himself, as he could no longer conceal it, that the little divinity of old, called Love, had beset him; the object, a creature like Viola—it will create no surprise that his feelings became wholly absorbed by the one subject, and his love the great question of his life. Still he had never spoken it. To him words seemed cold and unmeaning, and the set phrases gallantry would have dictated, worse than mockery.

Besides, he perceived intuitively, though he had not acknowledged it to himself, that there was some mysterious chain of connection between the fair Spaniard and Don Ferdinand de Cassino which he did not understand, and which, had he analyzed his feelings, he would have discovered that he feared to know, lest the blissful dream in which he was indulging should be dissipated and lost forever. He might have perceived that though the glorious vision was not destined to last, with a coward weakness common to our natures, he was anxious to prolong it. But if he had not told his love, and listened to the soft response, was he not equally certain that the feeling was mutual? He felt that it was, though no voice had given it utterance; and as the strains of music breathed around them, and he held her hand in his, which seemed to

return a gentle pressure; or, as fatigued with dancing, she leaned confidingly on his arm, and looked into his face and smiled, she seemed so exclusively his own, so much in her natural home, that it were a profanation of the affections to doubt their simple language.

It was at a moment like this, when no curious eye was on them; when the touch of her small white hand on his palm thrilled to his heart and brain, and her soft, dreamy eyes, which had just been drinking from his, had fallen to the ground, that Charles Warwick gained courage to speak of his love. The effect on the Lady Viola was electrical and strange. She started from him like the frightened deer from the hunter, while a deadly paleness overspread her face. She besought him, in a few broken words, as she sunk into a seat, to forbear. Alarmed and abashed, the young soldier begged her pardon; and while he offered her restoratives, strove, in the gentlest manner his confusion would allow, to soothe the agitation he had so unintentionally produced. He was but partially successful. For the rest of the evening she was oppressed with a weight on her spirits which she in vain endeavored to shake off; and among the earliest departures, accompanied by her father and Don Ferdinand, she retired.

Chapter Eleven.

A NIGHT ADVENTURE ON THE BATTERY. CHARACTERISTIC PASSAGE WITH AN EDITOR.

"Get ye to bed and sleep!
'Tis night, and dangers lurk beneath the stars.
Wolves are abroad—to bed! to bed! and dream,
And fight the nightmares rather."

THE ball was ended. One by one the carriages rolled away over the rattling streets, and left the mansion of the Governor, so lately the scene of bustle and revelry, silent and lone. Warwick could not retire to rest. Perplexed, his temples throbbing, and his pulses bounding at a fever pace, he sought the open air, passed hurriedly up Broadway for a quarter of a mile; then turning to the left, he struck the North River, and strolling down its banks by the quays, ere long found himself again in the vicinity of the Government House, and looking out from the shore over the quiet Bay. He bared his forehead to the cool sea-breeze, rubbed it with his hands, and gazed on the still landscape and the calm moon and sky, in the hope to restore the equilibrium of his system and feelings, which the various excitements of the night had completely unsettled.

The contemplation of nature will do much toward calming the most troubled mind. It is impossible to look on the grand elements of the universe around us, all in profound repose, without imbibing something of their spirit. The airs that fan us cool the heated blood. The living stars above us look sweetly down, and though set thick as grapes upon the vine,

they jostle not each other. The sea has gone to sleep; the earth is hushed and dreamless, and the Divinity which inspires the whole is seen and felt. It seems to chide and whisper us, as with the voice of one greater than ourselves, to be at peace—*and trust*.

Warwick was not disappointed. He felt soothed and invigorated by the influence of the scene, and in a better condition for reviewing the occurrences of the night, and the circumstances by which he was surrounded. Indeed, he had more than one cause of perplexity. First was the surprising agitation of the Lady Viola when he had ventured to declare his affection for her—a sentiment, on his part, to which she could not well have remained blind up to that hour, and which, he had many reasons to believe, was in reality reciprocal. He feared her conduct was in some way connected with Don Ferdinand; and in any event, it boded no smooth current to the river of his hopes. His future was beset with rocks and falls and quicksands, and his sky above was lowering black with storms. The disturbed and angry countenance of Don Ferdinand, especially in the latter portion of the evening, had not escaped his notice; and perceiving that that individual's evil eye was often resting on him, he had little doubt but that he himself was the principal object of his disquiet. Again, the appearance in a public newspaper of the verses he had addressed to the Lady Viola, to which his attention had been repeatedly called during the night, and the authorship of them pressed on him with many a knowing laugh, surprised and pained him. How they got there was beyond his conception; and to his mind there was something extremely indelicate in thus having thrown open to the public gaze the sacred chambers of his heart; and in this light, he felt, Viola would view it.

While occupied with these reflections, Warwick had stood with his back resting against a tree. From this posture he was aroused by the sudden onset of a ruffian, who had gained

his immediate vicinity without attracting his notice, but who now, fortunately, tripping on a stone, missed his aim, and fell prostrate at his feet. Perceiving a weapon glittering in his hand, he seized him by the collar, and after a slight resistance secured him, and handed him over to the care of the watch. He proved to be a foreigner; and Warwick at the moment deemed him merely some needy adventurer of the night.

Warned by the occurrence, however, and the lateness of the hour, without further delay he sought his home and couch; and ere long, in imagination, was again whirling in the dance, while strains of melting music floated round him; again Viola's hand returned his gentle pressure; and now more bold than before, he even dared to clasp her to his bosom; until at length, tired nature sunk into so deep a repose as to shut out all dreams.

It was late on the following morning when he arose; but after the occurrence of that important event, he lost no time in transporting himself to Stone Street, and into the office of the "New York Journal," then owned and edited by John Zenger, Esq. He found that gentleman in, but not in his usual good humor. Sir George Carlton and Mr. Gates had just left him. Those two individuals had not been able to rid themselves of the impression that somehow or other Mr. Zenger was in fault, that they had failed to peruse his journal of the day before, and accordingly had been giving him a lecture. Perceiving now that Captain Warwick was a little flurried, he put himself on his guard.

"I have called on you, Mr. Zenger," said Warwick, with assumed composure, "to inquire where you obtained those lines which appeared in your paper of yesterday, relating to a foreign lady now in this city; and by what authority you published them?"

"Are you the author of the lines, Captain Warwick?" inquired Mr. Zenger in return.

"That matters not."

"Beg pardon, but I think it matters a good deal. By what authority do you make your demand, pray?"

"I claim, of course, a controlling interest in those verses, Mr. Zenger, or I should not have meddled with the subject."

"That I am to understand, I suppose, as equivalent to an acknowledgment of authorship?" said Mr. Zenger.

"As you please."

"Allow me to say, Captain Warwick, that I was in no respect aware of this. The lines came into my possession from an entirely different direction. I could not suppose that you had any connection with them whatever."

"They were purloined from my possession," said Warwick, with emphasis.

Mr. Zenger took a minute for reflection. At length he said:

"I am sorry, Captain Warwick, but I must decline answering your inquiries at present."

"But it is necessary for me to have them answered at once."

"I must see the other party in interest first."

"Mr. Zenger," said Warwick, earnestly, "it is my right to have this perplexing occurrence explained to me at once; and I can not submit to delay."

"How will you help it?" said the editor, tartly.

"You are a scoundrel, sir," returned Warwick, at the same time raising his sheathed sword to inflict on him a blow.

The spirited and dexterous editor received it harmlessly on a chair; and intimated that it was time for the interview to close, by directing Captain Warwick's attention to the door.

Thus the two gentlemen separated; and it was evident, from the ridiculous notions of that day, on the subject of personal honor, in which they shared, that the affair could not well rest there. Hitherto their relations had been of the most friendly nature. Now, a contemptible love ditty seemed likely

to be the hinge on which the life of one or both of them was to be suspended. Hot youth is ever prone to magnify mole-hills into mountains. The best song that was ever written is not worth so much as a drop of blood; and bullet-holes and sword-cuts have no narcotic power, that they should be expected to assuage the smart of a wounded spirit.

Chapter Twelve.

MICHAEL JOHNSON. LOVE-MAKING IN HIGH LIFE. A FRIENDLY WARNING.

"Michael was his name;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
* * * * *
Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone, and oftentimes,
When others heeded not, he heard the south
Make subterraneous music."

ON the same day, even at so late an hour as that in which Charles Warwick and Mr. Zenger were discussing the important subject of difference between them, the mansion of the Spaniards remained quiet, exhibiting none of that stir and bustle usual to the establishment. In fact, the principal personages had not yet risen. Exhausted by the excitements of the previous evening, rather than by the exercise or the lateness of the hour at which the guests dispersed, they clung to their beds; and the numerous servants were either following the example of their masters or making a holiday morning of their leisure through the town. At length, near eleven o'clock, Michael Johnson issued forth, yawning, into the street, stretching out his long arms, first in one direction and then in another, as he promenaded back and forth on the pavement in front of the house; not that this veteran was either one of the revelers of the night before or sluggards of the morning; he had risen early, as was his wont, and had already attended to a long circle of duties within. At last, wearied with the prolonged stillness in doors, he had come out to keep himself awake and stir his limbs. As he walked, each movement was apparently made with a prodigious effort; and he

accompanied his hobbling steps with a sort of tune, half whistled and half sung, to which he seemed in some degree to accommodate his paces.

Michael Johnson, perhaps, may be regarded as a fair specimen of the genuine Yankee of his day; a class of men still in existence, and somewhat known in each of the four quarters of the globe; with such changes as the lapse of a century in this age of progress must necessarily effect; and whose main characteristics ever have been a homely, but frank and honest bearing, united to great shrewdness, resources in case of need, and energy of action. Nature and their own stern climate have given them hardy frames; and at the period of which we speak, though not always educated, technically speaking, they were generally intelligent; though boasting no extended acquaintance with books or the philosophy of the schools, necessity, and an inherent restless independence of mind, had taught them, until it had become the nature of their race to think and to philosophize.

Johnson, at this time, by many years had passed the meridian of life, and his person was large and ungainly. Ordinarily, or rather when there was nothing calling for a tension of his sinews, he was much bent, but was, however, still capable of becoming erect; and when in that posture he stood six feet and three inches without boots. At first sight, his limbs seemed hung so loosely together as to preclude all idea of sudden or effective motion. But this was illusory. A closer inspection exhibited an unusual volume and prominence of muscle, of such appearance as to convince the observer that bone and flesh alike had been worn to an iron hardness and toughness by exercise and exposure to the sunshine and storms, the heats and the colds, of different climes. His long, thick hair and heavy eyebrows had, doubtless, been dark, but both were now so much turned to gray as to render their primitive color uncertain; his nose was large and prominent;

and his countenance, across which deep lines were transversely furrowed, was very sallow, save a small portion of the cheek, from which the original florid hue had not yet entirely faded. As a counterbalance to all these disadvantages—and they were sufficient—were his clear, hazel eyes, which alone, of all his features, seemed to possess ordinary animation, and which, with his whole face, were generally lighted up with an agreeable smile, of a sad, but kindlier character, than often belongs to a man.

Such was the usual appearance of Michael Johnson; at the present moment, however, his brow was somewhat clouded. As he continued to walk backward and forward, he kept his eyes bent on the stones at his feet, as though in perplexing thought. At length he ceased singing; and as he apparently brought the subject which engaged his attention to a conclusion, he registered the decision with a half audible utterance.

"I'll see the boy, Warwick," said he. "Yes, I'll see him."

He stopped walking and looked up, as though about to start on the errand he had indicated, when he perceived a gentleman approaching, who accosted him as follows:

"Good-morning! sir. Do you belong to my Lord Don Manuel?"

The individual who made this inquiry was a short, dapper sort of person, dressed in the height of fashion, with an abundance of ruffles, rings, and chains, and who had just alighted from a carriage which remained a few paces off in the hands of a servant. Johnson had seen him before; nevertheless, he could not well refrain from examining him with a curious eye, as he replied:

"I am with his Excellenza at present."

The gentleman proceeded to extract a very small letter from an elegant pocket-book, and balancing a half-crown upon it, held it out in his hand as he said:

"Be so good as to deliver this note to my Lady Viola Torrillo."

"Sartainly, sir," said Johnson, "but keep your money."

The gentleman bowed and re-pocketed the silver, but showed no disposition to depart. He proceeded to speak of the weather and other indifferent subjects, in order to establish himself on a familiar footing with the individual before him, to whom, in his own mind, he proposed to apply a very dexterous pumping process before he should quit him. At length he remarked:

"The vessel that his Excellency came in, I think I have heard, was lost?"

"Yes, sir."

"I trust my Lord was no great sufferer?"

"He came near losing his life," returned Johnson.

"The cargo, I have understood," continued the other, "was a very rich one."

"Yes, yes, it was a valuable cargo."

"And a great part of it perished?"

"Sartainly," replied the old man.

The inquisitive gentleman became somewhat restless.

"My Lord's estates," he proceeded in a sort of desperation to say, "lie principally in Mexico, I am told, instead of Spain?"

"His Excellenza is stirring, I see," returned Johnson, with a smile. "Allow me to show you in, that you may put your questions to him in person?"

This the individual—who was no other than Major Van Quirk—hurriedly declined, and springing into his carriage, rolled away; while Johnson, having delivered the note left in his charge, proceeded on foot in an opposite direction.

Meanwhile, Don Manuel, in his morning-gown and slippers, was sitting in his parlor, sipping coffee and skimming over the newspapers, when he was interrupted by the entrance of his daughter. The Lady Viola, to all appearance, had

entirely recovered from the fatigues of the party. Her face was radiant with animation, and her eyes beaming with mischief, as she approached her father and placed a brace of billet-doux in his hand.

Don Manuel instinctively applied the gilded and rose-colored missives to his nose, as the perfumes with which they were loaded seemed to invite; but being playfully chid by his daughter for the ungallant act, he proceeded to an examination of their contents.

Both bore the signature of Theophilus Van Quirk. Number one was dated, and had been received, on the day previous, but in the hurry of preparation for the Governor's ball it had not, perhaps, commanded that attention which its merits deserved. It inclosed a printed copy of the verses with which the reader is so well acquainted, and which were declared to contain a brief representation and manifest of the state and condition of the Major's heart. He did not expressly declare himself the author of the lines, but left such an inference inevitable. Number two was a formal offer of marriage, worded in the most grandiloquent and approved letter-book style possible. Major Van Quirk spoke of his family as one of the first in his Majesty's Colony; and managed to mention, quite incidentally, that his elder brother was a member of the Council, and that the Van Quirks and the great Sawmilloway family were closely connected by marriage. He spoke of his intimacy with the Clintons, Carltons, and Gages, and closed his epistle with the apposite remark, that "his person, of course, must speak for itself."

Don Manuel burst into an immoderate fit of laughter as he concluded the perusal of these two model letters on love and marriage, in which, if the truth must be told, the Lady Viola most heartily joined. He threatened to have them framed and suspended against the wall, whereat a playful struggle commenced between him and his daughter for the possession

of the precious documents, in the midst of which Don Ferdinand entered the room.

The affair was too good to be kept; and notwithstanding the entreaties of Viola, Don Manuel persisted in showing the missives to Don Ferdinand. His daughter made her escape from the room; while Cassino perused the letters with an expression of countenance too plainly indicating that he was unable to discover the joke which had produced so much merriment. Having finished the reading, with an expression of rage he threw them on the floor and trampled them under foot. At this point, however, his ebullition of passion was cut short by the entrance, at the heel of the servant who came to announce him, of Colonel McSpike, a Scotch gentleman of birth and fortune with whom Don Manuel had contracted an agreeable and familiar acquaintance, and his arrival was shortly followed by that of Sir George Carlton and Mr. Gates, and one or two others, whose entrée at the Spanish mansion was of such a footing as to allow of their joining the male coterie which frequently assembled there before dinner.

Meanwhile Michael Johnson proceeded to the residence of Captain Warwick. He found that individual at home, but evidently in no very equable frame of mind. In fact, he had but recently returned from his interview with Mr. Zenger; the unpleasant termination of which, and the consequences that might grow out of it, he was still quite too unsophisticated to contemplate with composure. He felt vexed with himself; he felt vexed with Mr. Zenger; and with all other persons unknown, who had contributed to bring him into his present dilemma. But particularly was he vexed with himself; for he suspected that he had been overhasty. He had discovered that a copy of his unfortunate poem, which he had retained in his own pocket, was no longer there; and it occurred to him that his own carelessness, in part, might be in fault; that he might have dropped it in the street; and

furthermore, on reflection, the refusal of Mr. Zenger to explain how the lines came into his possession until he could see the other party in interest, did not appear altogether so unreasonable as at first. He still thought that individual in an unusually hot temper that morning, but on the whole was much less certain of his own ground than when he parted from him, and felt much less disposed to push him to extremities.

The thoughts of both Johnson and Warwick being thus occupied with subjects of unusual gravity, they soon perceived that the ease of their previous intercourse was altogether wanting. Warwick made a vigorous effort to overcome the obstruction. His esteem for the plain old man was deep and unaffected. It was more like the feeling of a son for his father, than of a youth toward his senior. Their first meeting on the Jersey beach, where each had exhibited a coolness and courage which could not fail to commend him strongly to the other, was of a nature to break down all mere ceremony and supposed differences of position between them; and Warwick had long since come to regard Michael Johnson as a friend whose good opinion he coveted, and on whose kindness and judgment, in case of need, he might unhesitatingly rely. He now accordingly rallied himself, with a hearty desire to entertain his guest in a manner corresponding to his opinion of his deserts.

Johnson perceived and appreciated the effort; but after a few moments of conversation, feeling that hesitation or circumlocution was not to his taste, he came directly to the subject-matter of his errand.

"Captain Warwick," said he, "I've a delicate duty to perform. I fear you are in danger; and lest, after having made up my mind to put you on your guard, I do it to no purpose, I will add, that I've reason to think Don Ferdinand is brewing mischief agin you."

Warwick was hardly surprised. He inquired, however, as to the nature of the apprehended danger.

"Its nater I can not exactly tell," said Johnson; "but I should not wonder if you were to be set on in the night."

"What! Don Ferdinand turn assassin?" exclaimed Warwick.

"Sartainly," said Johnson; "it is his nater. But most likely you would have to do with some of his rascals, of whom he has plenty about him."

This brought the occurrence of the previous night to Warwick's mind; and he related it to the old man.

"Just the thing!" said Johnson. "That is the Don to a sartainty. You gave the villain into the hands of the watch, Captain? Have you appeared agin him?"

"No," answered Warwick; "and had not intended to. I thought perhaps his stomach was in fault, rather than his heart."

"Well, it is best not to, I guess," said Johnson. "And now, Captain, you see the necessity of being on your guard. If I were you, I wouldn't venter out much nights, just at present; and I'd keep clear of by-places in the daytime, too."

"Am I to skulk, and hide, and run from this proud Spaniard?" said Warwick, warmly, "whom I drew dead out of the sea but a few weeks ago?"

"No," said Johnson, mildly; "but what can you do? My evidence agin Ferdinand is not of a positive nater; and the rascal you took captive last night would be cut in inches before he'd expose his master. But for the sake of better evidence, Captain, it is not worth while to invite the cut of a dagger?"

"No, no, good Michael," said Warwick. "One should never needlessly expose himself to danger. He should avoid that with as much care as he should be resolved, regardless of danger, always to perform his duty. It is not expected, I

presume, that I should at all relinquish the society of Don Manuel and his daughter?"

"On that pint I can't advise," said Johnson. "It must depend on your own feelins. This much I will say, however, the situation of that sweet child, Viola, can hardly be worse than it was before you knew her. She has no love for Ferdinand—she hates him, but he can't see it."

"In other words, my most excellent friend, if my affection for the young lady, which I freely acknowledge to you, but save her from the persecutions of her Spanish suitor, it will at least do something toward securing her happiness. Then, by Heaven! if she love me in return, as I believe she does, I will never yield her to any man. She shall be mine, and mine alone!"

The warmth with which these words were spoken startled the old man; but it did not seem to displease him. He rested his head on his palm for a few moments in silent thought; then, rising, he took the young soldier kindly by the hand, as he said:

"If this be your deliberate resolve, my boy, and your nater tells you it is right, then may the great Universal Lover of us all bless you in it! She is one of a thousand, the fairest and best of all the flowers I have seen in my day, save one. An old man's blessing be with you both!"

Thus saying, while a slight moisture bedewed the soft, sad smile in his eye, Michael Johnson took his departure.

Chapter Thirteen.

MAJOR VAN QUIRK'S PROSPECTIVE DUEL.

"Pistols and coffee for two!"

IT was evening; and Theophilus Van Quirk, Esq., Major, Attorney-at-Law and Counselor, and Solicitor in Chancery, was alone in his office, which was on a second floor. He was engaged at some little duties which his limited income, and expensive parade whenever he appeared in public, made it advisable that he should perform himself. Shoe-brushes and blacking occupied a chair beside him, where also stood a pair of boots, polished to the very extent of which they were susceptible. He was now employed with a sponge, extracting some spots from the collar of his coat, as the garment was extended on a chair. The room was small, and somewhat elaborately furnished. On one side there was a book-case with glass doors, within which hung a green curtain that concealed all the interior, save a shelf at the bottom where was arranged a tier of law books. On the other stood a table covered with green velvet, on which were very systematically arranged a fanciful glass inkstand, stamps, pens, sundry bundles of business papers, as would appear, folded exactly of the same dimensions, and tied with red tape; half a dozen or more of letters, so disposed as to exhibit their superscriptions; with various pamphlets and newspapers, American and foreign, carefully labeled and placed in piles against the wall. The remaining portions of the room were set out with a pier-glass, a sofa, and several chairs. Through an inner door, which

stood open, a much smaller room was discernible; and within, in plain view, was a dressing stand and mirror, with combs, brushes, bottles of cologne and unguents, for invigorating the complexion and the hair; and near by a very elegant leathern traveling trunk, and beyond still a bachelor's single bed.

Theophilus Van Quirk, Esq., as has been remarked, was a man of small stature: his utmost elevation might have been some five feet five. He was square built, and by no means of an unprepossessing exterior: indeed, he prided himself, and not without reason, on his good looks. He had found time among the cares of his profession, which were not always particularly pressing, to devote considerable attention to military matters; and as the reward of a long period of service with the Colonial Independents, backed by certain influences which he had managed to marshal in his favor, he had won for himself the prefix of Major. In this appellation he especially delighted; and it was doubtless his military associations which had conferred on him a certain dignity of carriage and action, for which he was not a little remarkable.

On the present evening, Major Van Quirk was decidedly in good humor; his countenance was the seat of buoyant happiness, evincing a mind satisfied with all the world, and with himself. He occasionally quitted his employment and surveyed himself complacently in the glass; elevating his person, and snapping the lids of his really handsome eyes together, as he imbued his features, at pleasure, with wreathed smiles, or frowns of fierce and terrible significance. From this last mood or expression he would again suffer himself to soften down into a condition of bland quiescence, when he would busy himself for a moment in detecting and immolating the straggling gray hairs, with which Time, he was fain to convince himself, had prematurely sprinkled his temples.

At length the Major's ear detected a foot-fall on the stairs. In a moment the coat was on his back; the blacking and

brushes vanished into a closet; and seizing a pen, he spread out a half-finished writing before him, and seated himself at his table. Mr. Gates and Sir George Carlton entered.

"Good-evening, Major," said the first of these gentlemen; "we find you always busy."

"How wags the world, my good fellow, and how thrives the profession?" said Sir George, before the Major had time to reply to the first salutation.

"Fairly, fairly," was the reply. "We lawyers lead a busy life of it, truly; and were we to attempt to give ourselves leisure, the ruin of our clients, you know, might be the consequence."

"True," said Sir George; "but how happened it, Major, that you made so little stir at the late term? You had but one cause on the calendar, I think."

"Oh, I have confined myself to the higher courts, of late," replied the Major. "But, Sir George, I think I have been guilty of a folly, and shall descend a little. When such old and respectable lawyers as Van Brunt will grab at any sort of business they can get, it looks singular to see a young man decline. Besides, I begin to perceive, I may as well have my share of whatever is going."

"How old *are* you, Major?" said Sir George, in a careless, privileged tone.

The Major halted, and stammered out something which was quite unintelligible.

"How old did you say?" said Mr. Gates.

"Oh, almost thirty," said the Major, hurriedly.

"Thirty!" echoed both gentlemen at once.

"Why, Major!" said Sir George, "you have been in the practice of your profession, one of the prominent ornaments of the bar of this city, for more than two-thirds of that period."

The Major exhibited a good deal of uneasiness. The question of his age was his sore point, and one on which he had

been obliged to stand a bantering, similar to the present, and frequently from the same parties, as often as once a week for many years. No wonder he was agitated.

"The name has misled you," at length he faltered. "There have been other Van Quirks who were lawyers."

"But," said Sir George, "you were one of the attorneys in the great will-case of 'Pickum *versus* Wickum,' in 173–; at any rate you have told me so, and that was twenty years ago."

"Oh, no," said the Major, beseechingly, "I have forgotten the year, but it can not be so long ago as that."

"I'll tell you what," said Mr. Gates, "this question has at length become one of so much importance, that I feel bound no longer to withhold what I know on the subject. You may have heard, Sir George, that in my childhood (Mr. Gates was now himself quite advanced, for a young man) I spent some time in these Colonies. While here at that ancient period, I went to school to the Major, and I very well remember that they used to call him old Mr. Van Quirk then."

Sir George laughed immoderately.

"My God!" gasped the Major. "Gentlemen, it seems to me that you are carrying this joke quite too far."

But his tormentors were compassionless.

"It is no joke at all," said Mr. Gates. "From the best evidence that can be gathered at this late day, it is quite certain that the Major has existed, in the present body, not one whit short of a century."

"And yet how well he is preserved," said Sir George. "He does not look to be over twenty now. His is a perpetual youth."

"I can not learn, from the oldest inhabitant," said Mr. Gates, "that there has been any perceptible change in him during his day."

"Why, he is a veritable second edition of the —— Jew,

with the 'wandering' expunged," said Sir George; "for the Major is altogether a station-*e*-ry character."

"That pun of yours is a most villainous one, Sir George," said Mr. Gates. "If the Major were a paper-dealer, it would do better."

"Were you to hear the Major give an inventory of the foolscap, the gallons of ink, and the bundles of tape he consumes in the course of a year, your judgment on that point would be less severe," returned Sir George. "But I am happy to say that this age-question is likely, at last, to be definitively settled. A dozen ladies, a whole jury, have this day bound themselves together by an oath, the next time the Major appears in court, to have him brought on the stand and questioned in this particular: and the result is to be duly entered on the public records of the city."

"Ah! that I shall be able to stand," said the Major, pricking up a little. "I am always at the service of the ladies."

"Like a most valorous knight as you are," said Mr. Gates. "But I have often wondered that a man of the Major's parts should persist in living single all his days, and suffer his vigor thus to waste away, and wealth and beauty, as is very well known, to sigh for him in vain."

"No flattery, gentlemen," said the Major, with a smile, "you know it is against the rules of the court."

"But I hear it whispered," continued Mr. Gates, "that the Major is at last in a fair way to be caught; indeed, that the subject of a matrimonial alliance is even now on the tapis. The foreign beauty is not one to be slighted; eh, Major?"

The Major arose quickly from his chair, threw his coat partly back from his shoulders, and sticking his thumbs into the armholes of his vest strode across the floor in a paroxysm of delight. After a minute or two of silent enjoyment he inquired:

"How did you hear of it, Gates?"

"Oh, down at Clinton's."

"Yes, I was there to-day," continued the Major, "and had some conversation with the Governor's lady on the subject. She thinks well of it, but—I declare, I don't know—I don't know."

The Major accompanied these expressions of doubt with several grave shakes of the head. His two friends regarded him with sympathizing but hilarious countenances.

"What a pity it is," said Sir George, "that she is poor. Every thing, I understand, was lost with the wreck."

"There you are mistaken," said the Major, quickly. "The old Don is as rich as Crœsus. He has his patrimonial estates in Spain, which are none of the smallest as I happen to know, besides extensive possessions in Mexico and the West Indies, and the Lady Viola is his only child. Let me alone to take care of number one, gentlemen."

The conversation was here suddenly interrupted by the entrance of a stranger, who proved to be the bearer of a dispatch for the Major. The missive was received with much ceremony. The party interested, begging to be excused for a moment, glanced at the superscription and broke the seal. At once his eyes became rooted to the paper. He turned deadly pale, and actually shook in his seat. At length he gasped out, "A challenge!"

"A challenge!" said Mr. Gates.

"A challenge!" echoed Sir George. "But compose yourself, my dear sir," he whispered. "Recollect you are in the presence of your antagonist's second."

In truth, for the moment Major Van Quirk was overcome. It did not, however, last long. With the readiness of his profession he recovered his self-possession. The proxy was invited to a seat. Taking a minute or two for deliberation, he turned to that individual, and with a voice sufficiently firm, but with much quickness, said :

"Tell your principal that I shall do myself the honor to send a bullet—"

"Are you not precipitating matters too fast?" said Mr. Gates, interrupting him. "Reserve your reply till to-morrow."

"Very well," said the Major, brightening. "But if any one wishes to meet me on the field of honor I am ready at any hour. I ask not a delay, even of ten seconds."

The bearer of the challenge was then instructed that his principal should hear from the Major to his satisfaction on the morrow, and thereupon he bowed himself very stiffly and very ceremoniously down stairs.

"Good God!" said Sir George, "can it be really so? To be cut off in the prime of life and usefulness by a pistol-ball or the thrust of a small-sword is no joke, Major. Whom can you, notoriously unpretending and inoffensive as you are, have had the misfortune to offend so mortally that he should thirst for your blood?"

The Major made no reply, but handed the note to his friends. They perceived that the few lines it contained were signed "Cassino," and that there was an important alternative in the terms of the challenge. If the Major would withdraw his pretensions to the Lady Viola Torrillo, which the Spaniard characterized as an "impertinent interference in matters which did not concern him," the breach might yet be healed.

"You will relinquish the lady?" said Mr. Gates.

"Never," replied the Major, firmly.

"Why, this is a serious matter, Major; what do you intend to do?"

"Fight him," said the Major, doggedly.

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted Sir George. "Here is the real stuff, true Yankee mettle, every inch. Blood, bone, and sinews are all properly tempered, I see. He will maintain the honor of a gentleman to the last gasp. America against Spain! I back the Yankee, two to one!"

"I go it, gentlemen, there's no mistake. Call me a teapot if I flinch. But I trust my friends will stand by me and see that I have fair play?" added the Major, with a ghastly smile.

"We will," returned Sir George. "I will be your second, and will call in the morning for your directions. But keep up your courage, man. Very likely there will be no hit the first shot, and then the affair may be settled; though these Spanish Dons are apt to be cursed close with a pistol. At any rate it is no ways certain that you get your quietus, Major—a mere flesh wound, or the loss of a leg or arm, perhaps, and what are they to a man's honor?"

The Major forced himself to laugh aloud at this pleasant picture, but the hollow sound of his own voice shocked him. Sir George continued:

"And now, my dear Van Quirk, you must wish a few hours to yourself to devote to the arrangement of personal matters so necessary on an occasion like this. We will therefore bid you good-night, but I will not fail to be with you early to-morrow."

Thus saying the two gentlemen departed.

Notwithstanding his peculiarities, Major Van Quirk was at heart an amiable and peace-loving man. His foibles were such as circumstances operating on a weak and vain mind had very naturally induced. His family reckoned among them men of parts, and his great error was in supposing that he was one of the number. While he was in reality the butt and plaything of the town, tolerated for amusement and out of respect to others, he imagined himself envied and admired. His ambition was high. He devoted himself to popular sides, and in the political questions of the day was quite apt to be over-zealous, and was especially ardent in defending the Colonists against the encroachments of the Crown. He looked on himself as a champion of the people, and was in the daily

expectation of some glorious reward, some high honor at thei hands, which he flattered himself was justly due to his valu able and unceasing efforts in their service, and which woul confer on him that wealth and consideration after which h pined.

But though a clamorous devotee at the Temple of Fame, th gallant Major had no especial desire for the sort of immor tality at present proposed. "*Killed in a duel*," would make very attractive heading wherewith to connect his name in newspaper paragraph, but the aspirations of his mind require something more than this to satisfy them. On his tomb whenever he might turn to earth, should be written some hig achievement, some glorious boon conferred on his country which would cause men to weep and wonder as they gaze on the place of his silent but majestic rest. His name, so h hoped and prayed and believed, should be fixed among th honored of ages, graved in imperishable characters on th brazen pillar of the world's renown. Neither had he an particular affection for flesh wounds, or the loss of legs an arms, so coolly enumerated by his friend Sir George in hi catalogue of chances. Indeed, any and all of these contin gencies were among those which, in his struggle after an ex emption from oblivion, he felt extremely solicitous to avoid.

When, therefore, the door closed on his noble friends, an he was left alone, he brought his hands convulsively to hi forehead, and subjected it to a pressure as though it had beer placed in a vice. For some minutes he remained standin where he bade them good-night, as though lost in a maze Thus he continued until his limbs refused to sustain him an longer, when he tottered to a seat and sunk into a conditio bordering on stupefaction. An hour passed off in this man ner, when, starting up wildly, he uttered a loud, demoniac laugh. Shaking himself, he paced hurriedly across the floor and struck his fist into the palm of his open hand. Instinct-

ively taking the lamp, he approached the mirror, but was horrified as he looked on himself. His face was bloated and haggard, his eyes red and swollen, and big drops of sweat stood on his forehead. Hastily wiping them away with his handkerchief, as though ashamed of the recoil of the flesh, he made a desperate effort to regain the mastery of himself. After a little he partially succeeded. He then drew out his watch, a repeater glittering with stones, and marked the hour of the night; and for a few moments watched intently the ceaseless flight of time. He returned it to his fob, and, acting on the hint of Sir George, arranged his writing materials and seated himself at his table.

He dated a sheet as though for the commencement of a letter, and mechanically wrote beneath:

"*My Dear Mother.*"

Strange it is that when trouble is upon one—when Disease holds him in his wasting hand, or dangers threaten him, even though he be some hardened wretch, deforming instead of beautifying the fair fields of earth, his mind will turn back to her who gave him being. She will be remembered with the few, in his last farewell to the world; and around the recollection of none other will cluster purer, better thoughts. And yet it is *not* strange. Mother! Every thing kind and lovely and noble is in the name; and could one forget his mother, he would be no longer man. He would have lost the last ethereal spark, and become a demon—less than a brute, for brutes have natural affection.

But the Major's mother had been dead for many years; and after a period of abstraction, during which he sat with his head braced on his hands, as he perceived what he had written, he shuddered at the omen. Throwing by the sheet, he took another, and with great firmness and deliberation commenced as follows:

"*The last Will and Testament of* ——"

There was a slight tap at the door, and Sir George Carlton and Mr. Gates re-entered. Walking familiarly up to the table, their eyes rested on the unfinished writing.

"Nonsense! nonsense!" said Sir George, cheerily. "Throw by your will, Major, and take a new lease of life."

"For another full century, at least," thrust in Mr. Gates.

"After leaving you," continued Sir George, "we fell in with the Don; and if our arrangement, which is strictly honorable to both parties, meets with your approval, the affair is ended. All now rests with you."

A change came over the countenance of the Major.

"Are you in earnest, Sir George?" said he, with evident tokens of doubt and trepidation.

"Never more so in my life," replied Sir George. "Cassino is a reasonable man; and I ventured to assure him that you were another; and that the difference between you must have originated in some mistake. The kernel of the whole matter is, that the Lady Viola Torrillo is his betrothed wife. This he frankly informed me; and I unhesitatingly assured him that you would be the last man in the world to interfere with a contract, unless professionally, in behalf of a client. Was I right?"

"You are always right," said the Major, grasping Sir George warmly with one hand and Mr. Gates with the other. His heart was too full for further utterance, and he hung on them in silence. At length, suddenly bounding away over the floor, he clapped his hands and burst into a triumphant laugh.

"I see how it is," exclaimed he, speaking in snatches as his merriment permitted. "I tell you, Sir George—I tell you, Gates, I frightened him out of it! You recollect what I said to his second! The bragging Spaniard! Had we fought, I should have muttoned him to a certainty!"

The Major's two friends received these declarations with the most uproarious mirth, in which the Major himself joined. They shouted and stamped and danced about the floor, amid successive explosions of laughter, until they were exhausted and could laugh no more.

"Admirable! admirable!" at length exclaimed Sir George, through his tears. "The Major is correct, though that version of the matter had not occurred to me before. I see it plain enough now."

"America forever!" shouted Mr. Gates, though his voice, broken by his convulsions, was little more than a squeaking whisper. "The Yankee has whipped, and Spain is floored!"

At this moment a servitor, whom the two gentlemen had directed to follow after them, entered, bearing on his arm a basket of champagne; and though it was now in the small hours of the night, Major Van Quirk's last Will and Testament was unceremoniously stuffed into a drawer, and the three friends made a jubilee and a morning of it, around his velvet-covered table.

Chapter Fourteen.

THE SPANISH PARTY SUDDENLY QUIT THE CITY. THE SCENERY OF THE HUDSON.

"Around its base the bare rocks stood,
Like naked giants in the flood."

THE duel which was not, between Don Ferdinand de Cassino and Major Van Quirk, soon got wind; and in the elucidation of that event it was commonly reported that the difficulty between those two gentlemen had originated in a copy of complimentary verses, which the gallant Major had picked up in the street, procured to be published, and sent to the Lady Viola Torrillo as his own. This opened the door for an explanation between Charles Warwick and Mr. Zenger, to their mutual satisfaction; and thus was another anticipated passage-at-arms, to the great chagrin of the gossip-mongers of the city, averted.

Relieved of this one cause of disquietude, Warwick, nevertheless, still found himself restless and unhappy. Day after day passed away, and nothing occurred to satisfy him of the exact position he occupied with respect to the Lady Viola. She, meanwhile, was lovely as ever, but much of her spirit and buoyancy was gone. She evidently strove to be cheerful and merry, but there was something concealed which weighed her down and overmastered her strongest efforts. Toward Warwick, since the night of the Governor's ball, her deportment had been restrained, but without any mixture of unkindness. She steadily manifested her regard and confi-

dence in him, but carefully avoided a denouement. Admirers thronged and flattered her, but their devotion gave her no pleasure; and since the chivalrous onset of Major Van Quirk, and its lugubrious termination, even the pretensions of the perpendicular Colonel McSpike, which were becoming quite notorious in the city, were insufficient to provoke a smile.

On the obtuse Scotch officer the whiskers and frowns of Don Ferdinand de Cassino, which kept many a spark at bay, were lost—absolutely thrown away. With whiskers he was familiar, as he sported a goodly pair himself; and frowns he feared not; indeed, it is by no means certain that he ever observed them. He was a bachelor of forty-five, and his thoughts were very properly engaged with his lady-love, toward whom he was devoted and ardent, but scrupulously respectful. Every thing portended that with him the crisis had nearly arrived, when, to the general surprise, his particular attentions ceased. He still frequented the house, and was apparently happy as ever, and no one attempted to account for the sudden change in his conduct. It was only known that he had been closeted, for a short period, with his friend Don Manuel; and, at the close of the conference, retired sullenly to his lodgings, and for that night refused his second bottle and cigar. The next morning his appetite returned, and his face was serene again as the yellow moon, which it very much resembled.

Suddenly it was rumored that the Spanish party were about to leave the city; and the truth of the report was immediately confirmed to Charles Warwick by a formal announcement to that effect from Don Manuel himself. That gentleman stated that it was their intention to proceed up the Hudson River, for the purpose of viewing the already famous scenery of those waters, and to embark at some eastern or Canadian port for Europe.

Warwick felt that he had no right to be surprised that his

foreign friends were about turning in the direction of home; and yet he was surprised. The passage from the upper waters of the Hudson to the New England ports, at that day, was difficult; and to the ports of Canada, both difficult and dangerous; while the chances of obtaining a comfortable passage for Spain, in that direction, were much less favorable than at New York. But the one thought that he was about to be separated from the Lady Viola, soon overmastered every other. From this he shrunk with a feeling of desperation. And yet what could he do? Latterly a positive fatality had seemed resting on their intercourse. Her father or Don Ferdinand were always present. And yet, were he to solicit a private interview, after her inexplicable agitation and conduct when he declared his love, and her obvious desire since to avoid the subject, what could he say? When Don Manuel announced his contemplated departure, she was present. Warwick could not catch her eye, but he perceived she was deeply affected; and realized at once that she was in as much trouble as himself. He determined to seek an explanation, and solution of his own destiny, from her father.

Before this resolve was carried into execution, however, he received an invitation from Don Manuel to keep them company for the few days they should spend on the Hudson. This was given with so much cordiality and earnestness, as to convince Warwick that, so far as Don Manuel was concerned, the separation of himself from his daughter formed no part of the motive of the Spaniards in quitting the city. Could it be that Don Manuel had remained blind to the condition of affairs between himself and the Lady Viola? It must be so, or, notwithstanding any relation that might subsist between Don Ferdinand and his daughter, the Spaniard was willing to encourage his pretensions. Warwick perceived, as the invitation was given, that portentous clouds gathered on the countenance of Don Ferdinand, which that individual

had great difficulty in silently suppressing; but he also perceived with pleasure, that the effect on the Lady Viola was just the reverse. The shadows for the moment fled from her face; and her moist eye, speaking more than she intended, and what she dared not utter in words, but could not restrain, met his. The meeting was unintended on her part, and yet both knew instantly that they understood each other, and even she could not regret it. Warwick accepted the invitation.

The navigation of the Hudson River, at the period of which we write, was a very different affair from what it is at present; when, in the course of a few hours, our magnificent palaces, which we call steamboats, sweep over its whole navigable length. The business and travel of these waters, at that time, were conducted mostly in sloops; and a voyage from New York to Albany, at best, occupied some days, and occasionally weeks. It was on a fair morning of early summer that one of the largest and most commodious of this sort of craft, which had been chartered for the purpose, received on board the Spaniards with their long train of attendants. Warwick, having bade his more than mother a kind farewell, for a few days, was with them; and the best wishes of a multitude of friends in the city accompanied them, as with spread canvas their vessel moved from the quay. Gradually they cleared themselves from the swarming craft of the bay and the bustle of the little city; and slowly they left the town behind them, and pushed forward on the bosom of the clear river; and no accident having occurred to retard their progress, on the second day they entered the wild and romantic scenery of the Highlands.

To Warwick, all this was familiar; and yet it had lost none of its charms. To his companions it was new, and filled them with rapture. And who, indeed, so dull to the inspiring aspects of nature, when witnessed in her magnificent

creations, as to be able to pass between the points of Newburgh and New York, over the glorious Hudson, though it be for the hundredth time, without having awakened in his breast the most exalted emotions? Water with its varying life and power, rock, toppling crag and hill, and threatening sky and winds, here all conspire to furnish images of sublimity and beauty. To enjoy the views in all their impressiveness, one should descend the river at night, as did the writer of this history the first time he saw the Highlands. It was a night without a moon, when a few faint stars alone rendered near objects indistinctly visible. The vessel was one of the proudest steamboats of that water; and she pushed onward with the speed of a race-horse, though a stiff gale was blowing in her teeth. On approaching the gorge of the Highlands, the wind, compressed in a narrow channel, came with redoubled force; and so cutting keen, as to drive every passenger, save one, below. He, sick and alone, holding on to the bow of the vessel, as she plunged among those dark, threatening hills, through which the mighty river drives its course, and on whose pointed summits the irregular patch of sky which was visible, seemed to rest, thought not of exposure. He was spell-bound, dumb. The steamer swept on, and fairly entered the gorge—ahead, an unknown chasm, an abyss, black as a thousand midnights; and now, shut in, the same was behind; with no sound, save the terrible wailing of the winds, the roar of the struggling floods, and the desolate *creak, creak*, of the engines; while with all the massive darkness around, the immense, black, interminable peaks above, which stretched hundreds of feet overhead, and seemed closing to overwhelm the doomed ship, were as plainly defined on the sky, as though each had been edged with a border of fire. With him, there was an undefined dread, that the vessel, in her furious career in the dark, was about to plunge into the deep, mysterious abysses of the earth; which might have been painful, had not

every faculty been exhilarated and chained by the grand enchantment of the scene.

To the Lady Viola the scenery of the Hudson was full of witchery and romance. By daylight the rougher views were shorn of most of their terrors, and she gazed enraptured. Warwick was by her side, to explain, to give her the name of each locality; and to connect with many a valley and peak some legendary story.

A very little exercise of the imagination enabled the Spaniards to recall among the Highlands objects with which they were familiar. The Palisades they likened to immense lines of fortifications, constructed on a scale of magnificence, and frowning with a gloom and grandeur which their own famous country, with all its ancient honors, could not equal; while many a mountain peak presented somewhere on its side an apparent tower or crumbling castle, thus oft arraying the landscapes in all the feudal glories of the East.

Doctor Oquetos has been mentioned already as a gentleman of learning and parts. He was of an original, penetrating mind, and something of an antiquary withal; and was accordingly seized with an ardent desire to explore these heights, and solve the mystery of the seeming fortifications which defended them. He was only driven from his purpose, at last, by exaggerated fears of the Indians. Thereupon he became engaged in a profound discussion with Signor Antonio, the priest, as to the origin of the ancient works scattered through the Highlands of the Hudson; he maintaining, with great warmth and logic, that they belonged to the ancient race who once inhabited the American Continent, and built the great Pyramids of Mexico; while the priest argued with equal zeal and rhetoric, that they were of the handicraft of the giants of old.

Chapter Fifteen.

LOOKING TOWARD THE WILDERNESS. A CLOUD AND A SEPARATION.

"Farewell! farewell! The living lights have set,
The sun hath hid him in the silent sea;
And the dull moon her office doth forget,
To cheer us with her beams when gone is he.
Farewell! farewell! Ah, thus is hope with me."

THE commerce of the Hudson at the middle of the last century was already considerable. The city of New York, by a writer of that period, was compared to a hive of bees, so industrious and stirring was its population; and the importance of their river, as a vast internal thoroughfare, which, with their capacious and excellent harbor, was to give them a superiority over other American sea-ports, was already seen in perspective. Frequent vessels dotted the bosom of the river, laden with a great variety of products and merchandise: peltry, the produce of the Indian fur trade, the center of which was at Fort Oswego; lumber, wheat, and all the variety of grains; butter from Orange, which, even at that early day, was already famous for the article; cheese, livestock, and all the native and domestic produce of an extensive and fertile country; together with powder and shot, blankets, trinkets, and spirits for the Indians; and dry-goods, groceries, and munitions for the towns and settlers in the valleys of the Hudson and Mohawk, and the frontier stations and forts.

A return from the North was therefore easy; and Warwick had intended to accompany his friends at least to Albany; when, having been already several days on the river, delayed

by calms and head winds, and pausing to cull each cluster of flowers from the rocks, and view each fairy prospect by the way, the sloop came to anchor near the point where now stands the thriving town of Newburgh. Several respectable farms and farm-houses skirted the shore; and here Don Manuel declared it his intention to debark and pursue his journey by land. He even proposed to push beyond the settlements quite into the interior of the wilderness, and shape his course for Montreal.

For the second time Warwick was surprised at the plans of his friends. Thinking they might be ignorant of the dangers to which a proceeding of this kind would subject them, he explained to them the warlike character of the Six Nations, through whose territories they would have to pass; and informed them that those tribes were already in a highly irritated and inflammable condition, and extremely jealous of intrusion, or foreign interference of any sort. In reply, Don Ferdinand tauntingly reminded him that a Spaniard, with a few hundred men, had conquered populous Mexico; and expressed a readiness himself, with their present force, to march through the whole length and breadth of the Confederacy. Don Manuel also seemed to treat the idea of danger lightly; and Warwick, perceiving that there was a mystery connected with the movements of the Spaniards, which he did not understand, refrained from further obtruding his opinions. It was obvious, however, that the time of separation between him and the Lady Viola was at hand.

Accommodations for the principal persons of the party were obtained for a single night, at the main dwelling of the neighborhood, which was the residence of a Scotchman by the name of Cameron. During the evening, Warwick strove to obtain a few moments of private conversation with Viola, but in vain. Don Ferdinand was ever on the watch, and evidently determined to prevent it; and as he noted the chagrin and sadness

which, as the hours wore away, gathered in spite of him, on the face of the young American, he could not well repress his exultation. He gave expression to the feeling in various ways—by look and word and gesture—but all so cunningly guarded as to mean any thing or nothing, save that each one bore its sting. Warwick, while he retained as composed a surface as possible, was well-nigh furious.

The night, to our hero a sleepless one, passed off, and the morning came. Determined on an explanation, determined to understand his ground before he should part company with his Spanish friends, he sought an interview with Don Manuel; and while the men were debarking with the baggage, the two walked up along the river bank together.

They promenaded for some distance in silence, which, perceiving that the youth was at a loss and not exactly at his ease, the Spaniard was the first to break.

"We are about to part, Captain Warwick," said he, "unless you consent to share the dangers of the forest and the Indians with us, of which you have given us so vivid a picture; but wherever we may go, whatever may befall us, whatever oceans or continents may divide us, we shall always bear in warm and grateful remembrance our excellent American friend, to whom so heavy a weight of obligation is due—to whom we owe life, and consequently all besides."

Pained at these expressions, for the moment, Warwick was at a loss for words to reply; and Don Manuel continued:

"You have said that at some future period you may visit Europe. God grant that we may there again meet! It would be the pleasure, as it should be the business, of my life, to repay to you some small portion of our obligations."

"No more of this, my dear sir, I implore you!" exclaimed Warwick. "You mistake me! you overwhelm me! And though I ardently hope and pray that we may hereafter meet, I beg of you as you value my feelings, to say no more, and

think no more, of the slight services which a kind Providence enabled me to render, and which your generosity induces you very much to magnify. But, sir——"

"But what?"

"There is a subject I would gladly recommend to your favorable ear; a boon I would ask, could it be granted, above all price to me."

"Go on!" said Don Manuel. "It is granted ere spoken."

"At least, sir, before we separate, for my own peace of mind and the government of my future actions, I desire a frank explanation, on one point, from the father of the Lady Viola."

"What has my daughter to do with the matter?" said Don Manuel, quickly.

"I love her."

The hand of the Spaniard rung on the hilt of his sword at the instant of this declaration; but checking himself he drew haughtily back, as in a tone of surprise mixed with contempt, which he could not wholly conceal, he said:

"*You*, sir?"

The action and the word operated like magic on the free American, whom no blood nor king had ennobled, and whom no stamp, save that of God and his own honest acts, had impressed as a man. His eyes flashed with a stream of indignant fire, but his bearing instantly became calm and self-possessed. Elevating his tall person, he stood with his arms folded on his breast; and the Spaniard perceived that he was confronted by one as proud as himself. A moment's reflection made Don Manuel regret his harshness.

"Forgive me, young man," he said. "I was wrong to shape my reply to you in uncourteous language. And notwithstanding the opinions of the world in which I have been educated, I am free to confess that the savior of the life of my daughter is in every way worthy of her. But Viola, in this respect, is beyond my control. She is affianced; and in the

sight of the Church and of Heaven is already the wife of another."

"Don Ferdinand de Cassino?" said Warwick.

"The same."

"Will the contract be ratified?"

"It will."

"Your daughter and myself, then, Don Manuel Torrillo," said Warwick, impressively, "have already seen each other quite too much for the happiness, perhaps, of both our future lives. That I learned to love her, you can not wonder. That she should love me, as I believe she does, is, perhaps, more of a marvel. But here we part. I would see her once more; but I perceive, under the present aspect of affairs, that it might not be wise for either. You will bear her my adieus; and I say to you, that I love her more than I ever have, or ever can again, love any human being. Tell her whatever you may deem prudent; only let my leave-taking be kind. And now, farewell!"

Warwick hurriedly took Don Manuel's hand; and the Spaniard, whose better feelings were aroused, almost convulsively clung to him. He besought him not to leave them so abruptly; to see Viola, and receive an expression of her thanks, once more, before his departure; and overwhelmed him with protestations of obligation and esteem. In the midst of these the youth broke away, and while the Spaniard shouted after him, disappeared among the trees which skirted the shore.

Don Manuel, with a cloud on his brow, and misgivings of mind to which he had hitherto been a stranger, slowly and thoughtfully turned to seek his daughter.

Chapter Sixteen.

THE SPANISH CAVALCADE. SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF AN AMERICAN WOOD.

"Hark! I hear the traveler's song,
As he winds the woods along!
Christian! 'tis the song of fear—
Wolves are round thee, night is near;
And the wild thou dar'st to roam—
Oh! 'twas once the Indians' home!"

THE Lady Viola, from the window of her chamber at Mr. Cameron's, had observed her father and Charles Warwick as they walked out together, and more than suspected the object of the young American. She also saw her father as he returned alone, and was able very accurately to divine the result of their conference. She even suspected that it had come to an abrupt termination; and that she should see Charles Warwick no more. Though deeply affected, she resolutely summoned all the strength of mind she possessed to her aid, and met her father, on his entrance, at least with an outward show of composure.

"My daughter," said he, very kindly, our friend and benefactor, Captain Warwick, has left us this morning, on his return to New York."

"What! without one word of farewell?" said Viola; and her cheek blanched in spite of her.

"He thought, doubtless," returned Don Manuel, eyeing her closely, "that a ceremonious leave-taking could conduce to no good; and such farewells, my dear, are always painful. Are you ill, my child?"

"No, no," said Viola, faintly. "And still——

She stopped abruptly, and covered her face with her hands, while her whole frame shook with agitation. He gave her water, and salts to smell; and besought her to be calm. Recovering a little, she continued:

"It is very strange, dear father, that Captain Warwick should leave us in this manner. We are too much indebted to him to make such a parting pleasant. I could certainly have wished to thank him once more for the life he saved."

"God will reward him, Viola," said her father. "Heaven will smile on the path of that young man, and scatter it full with blessings. Unfortunately, our debt to him is one of those which can never be repaid. Our thanks, our affectionate regard, our gratitude, he must ever have. He sent you, by the hand of your father, my child, his most kind and loving adieus."

Viola burst into tears; and Don Manuel, thoughtful and troubled, spent some time in fruitless endeavors to console her. On being left to herself she gave full vent to her grief in a hearty outbreak of sobs and tears, which relieved her; but two or three hours after, as the party was about getting under way, and a mule was brought up to the door for her to mount, she had barely recovered her composure.

The preparation and the march had been placed under the immediate command and direction of Michael Johnson. Occupied with the duties of the morning, that individual until the present moment had not been able to assure himself of the positive absence of Charles Warwick. Falling in with Don Ferdinand he inquired concerning him.

"Captain Warwick has decamped," replied the Spaniard, with a sneer.

"Decamped?" said Johnson with surprise. "Do you mean to say that the boy has run away?"

"I mean that he has taken French leave," returned Don Ferdinand, tartly; "and where he may be, by this time, Heaven can witness, I know as little as I care."

"Don Ferdinand," said Johnson gravely, while suspicions of the worst import flashed across his mind, "I hope no evil has befell the lad. 'Tis not in nater for him to run away, or be skeared off; and I tell you, if you have played foul with him, you shall answer for it."

"Caitiff!" exclaimed Don Ferdinand, black with rage. "What do you mean by such language to me? Down on your knees! down, old man! and ask pardon for the insolence of your tongue."

"I kneel to none but God," said Johnson, quite unmoved at this display of passion. "But have I wronged you, Don Ferdinand?"

"Knave!" said Don Ferdinand, between his compressed teeth, and at the same time approaching him in a menacing attitude. "Were it not for your gray hairs, I would force you down. You shall repent of this."

"Don't waste your threats, young man," said Johnson. "If I've wronged you, I'm ready to undo it. Forgive and forget is my rule: so let there be peace between us. A man can't always govern his thoughts; and mine, good or bad, are very apt to come to my tongue."

"Now you have found your senses again, Michael, and acknowledged your error," said Don Ferdinand, "I will tell you all I know about the disappearance of Captain Warwick. But first allow me to inquire why it is that you feel so deep an interest in that individual?"

"I hardly know," replied Johnson; "but most sartainly I like him."

"To me he seems an empty, conceited puppy," said Don Ferdinand. "I could not learn that he ever had a father; unless, perhaps, as some surmised, he may be a catch of a night, of the old British officer who adopted him."

"Captain Warwick's a whole man of himself," said Johnson; "and so far as that's consarned, it don't matter whether he

ever had any father or mother at all. I like him because he's ginerous and brave; because he risked his own life to save yours; because he took the Lady Viola from my arms on that same awful night, and enabled me to save Don Manuel; because——"

"Enough! enough!" interrupted Don Ferdinand. "I did not ask for a history of the gentleman's life. Neither do I deny my obligation to him. But, good Michael, let me whisper a word in your ear. Were I in peril again, I would much rather die than that his should be the hand to draw me from it."

Torn with conflicting emotions, Don Ferdinand paused for a moment, and then added:

"With respect to the departure of this person, it is said that he has returned to New York; that his sudden exit from among us was occasioned by some high words which occurred between him and Don Manuel this morning, in which they nearly drew their swords on each other. The cause I have not learned. Doubtless our friend Don Manuel, however, was altogether in fault."

With another sneer, Don Ferdinand turned away; and Johnson, though his suspicions were not wholly allayed, deemed it prudent, at the moment, to push his inquiries no further.

The Spanish party, when drawn up in the order of march, presented somewhat of a warlike appearance; and attracted the curious eyes, and greatly excited the wonder, of the peaceful inhabitants of the neighborhood. Each man was armed to the teeth. In the forefront was the stalwart Johnson; the good leader, on whose hardihood and courage, on whose prudence in avoiding dangers, and wisdom in surmounting them, and acquaintance with the country to be traversed, were based their expectations of a favorable issue to their undertaking. Next came the rank and file, two by two, numbering some fourscore of well-appointed men; and following them, mounted on

horses and mules, were the persons of note and females, Don Manuel and his daughter and maids, Don Ferdinand, and the doctor and priest. Still coming after were the led horses, laden with provisions, baggage and tent cloths, munitions, and all the various articles common to a camp; while a guard of a few men brought up the rear. As a whole, the party presented the appearance of a military expedition, rather than a simple company of travelers.

For a time as they receded from the river, they were still cheered with the sight of an occasional cleared field; but as they advanced, these signs of the vicinity of civilized man disappeared, and all that remained as a witness that the white man had ever trod those wilds was the blaze, or mark of his axe, on some tree of the forest. Their course was westerly; and Johnson, avoiding the more hilly regions, led them at a very leisurely pace through ever-changing prospects of low-land valley and stream. When night came, they cleared a little spot from its under brush, spread their tents, and slept in quiet and safety.

On the following day, the landscape became more rugged and broken. Hills presented themselves in their path, over which, as they could not always avoid them, they were sometimes forced to wind their toilsome way. From their tops mountains arose in the distance, spurs and straggling ridges of the Catskills; and between would lie spread scenery so soft, and wild, and beautiful, that a painter would gladly have caught it to give it life. Here a small lake with waters of transparent clearness, and borders fringed with green, lay sleeping among the hills; but sent off from its blue bosom chattering rivulet, tumbling in frequent cascades, and meandering through somber ravines, until it reached the lower valleys, where, making soft music, it coiled among the willows which dipped their blossoms in its gentle tide, and was lost to sight in the distance. In another spot their way would be obstruct-

ed by a profusion of jagged stones, laying in confusion around, as though broken and scattered by some convulsion of nature; and again, by huge, naked rocks, with bare brows, worn smooth by the storms of ages, and venerable sides, where a little pale moss was clinging, and where, perhaps, from some crevice a single honeysuckle waved. These cast threatening shadows upon them, and sometimes opened in frightful precipices at their feet.

Contrasted with these rougher scenes were the wide valleys through which they passed, uplifted with gentle swells, traversed by silver streams, and robed in one full mantle of rejoicing vegetation. Here, perhaps, on a gentle acclivity lying off to the sweet south, was an extensive grove of the sugar-tree, the towering maple, one of the most valuable, as it is one of the most beautiful, of the trees of our American forests; and near by a cluster of the beech, with smooth and variegated trunks, swelling with fatness, while the crown of the eminence would be covered with the mast-like and evergreen pine. In the space of a few acres would be seen, flourishing in wild luxuriance, set thick and mingled together so that their branches would interlock, arrayed in every shade of green known to nature, nearly every variety of tree belonging to the latitude and the country: the oak, the elm, the maple, the beech, the hickory, the chestnut, with its sunny flowers; the cedar, with its scented wood; the spruce, the odorous locust, with its scolloped leaves; the tulip-tree, and many more; while a little apart, on the bank of some stream, the willow would wave its thread-like stems in the wind, and the sycamore spread its great white supplicating arms to the sky.

Sometimes our travelers found themselves threading a long vista of the forest, shut in by an umbrageous canopy formed by the giant monarchs of the wood, where the rays of the sun never penetrated and a perpetual twilight reigned. Often the timid deer bounded from their path, disturbed as he was sleep-

ing in the shade or drinking at some stream or spring; and, again, the wild turkey, singly or in flocks, startled at their approach, raised high his jeweled head, and gobbling his surprise with mock dignity would slowly strut away, but anon, quickening his pace and breaking into a run, or mounting some old log or convenient stone, with much ado he would raise his awkward body into the air, and with heavy flight and sounding wings bear away through the trees. Sometimes they would come suddenly upon the drumming partridge, with her Indian brood, when the mother-bird, with the sly instinct of her nature, to draw attention from her young, would bound twenty feet away like a ball, and there hop and flutter and tumble on the ground, as though engaged in a furious combat with some invisible foe. On approaching her, however, she would fly off on quick and whirring wing, and it is needless to add that her equally cunning progeny were nowhere to be found. Of the color of the dry leaves, they would shrink among them motionless, as though dead, and in the dim light of the forest would easily escape detection. The sportive squirrel, the red, black, and gray, with the little chipper chipmuck, disturbed in their solitudes, with plumy tails waving, were constantly dodging around and chattering defiance, while the flying squirrel leaped from tree to tree, performing prodigies of daring above their heads. The kingly eagle looked down in wonder from his eyrie; the pigeon darted by, his purple breast flashing as he went; the robin hopped from limb to limb, and sung his songs, at once ready to make the acquaintance of man; the blackbird gave them his simple lay from the tree-top, and the lark his morning carol from the sky. The wild-goose and loon screamed from the lake; the turtle-dove uttered his plaintive notes from the dell; the quail, that vulgar weather-prophet, piped his cry of *more wet*, or *no more wet*, as his sage opinion at the moment might happen to be; while the melancholy whip-poor-will, from his solitary

bush, poured forth his soul of sadness in the twilight, and the stupid but pretentious owl hooted and whistled at them in the night.

But frequently the party was saluted with sights and sounds of a less agreeable and more startling character. Occasionally the gaunt wolf trotted out of their path, looking back wishfully as he departed; the black bear was disturbed in his covert, and sent forth his hideous growl; and the panther and the wild-cat would spring angrily to some tree, where they would crouch, with flashing eyes and open jaws, in readiness for a flying descent on their unexpected foes; or some solitary Indian, with naked bust and immovable countenance, would look out from behind a tree, or down from some height, upon them as they passed.

The Lady Viola, though ill at ease, and called to the endurance of fatigue much beyond her wont, could not but enjoy these rough, but, it must be confessed, most fascinating displays of forest-life and scenery. The summer winds, playing on the boughs and vines for harp-strings; mountain, valley, and stream, in constant change; the profusion of animal and vegetable life; the immense size, and especially height, of American trees; the variety and beauty of the wild flowers; the thousand birds, with their songs; and even the beasts of prey, and their miniature resemblances, the squirrels, sporting so thickly around, were all to her fountains of soothing and pleasure. The bouquets which she received as offerings in these wilds were neither few nor meagre. Her father culled flowers for her with a lover's eye; and Don Ferdinand, not to be outdone, fastened to the frontlets of her mule a nosegay of such size as almost to conceal the animal's head; while the rugged Johnson would stop for her to come up, and with a smile of parental kindness and the gentleness of a woman, would present her with a tuft or garland twisted from the leaves and blossoms of his country. Among these the

wild rose, the honeysuckle, and the violet, all full of breathing perfumes, would be bound up with the lily, the ground-pine, and the winter-green, still retaining its red and fragrant berry.

Though neither wild beasts nor Indians had sufficed to alarm the Lady Viola, it is not to be concluded that she was absolutely above the sentiment of fear. On the second night of their encampment, in the somber hour of twilight, while the men were still busy erecting the tents, and, to satisfy the military habits of Don Manuel, surrounding them with a barricade of brush-wood; and she and her maid Ruby were a few rods away, essaying to swing themselves on a grape-vine, the maid suddenly uttered a shriek of terror and sunk prostrate on the ground. As she fell, she both looked and pointed in a certain direction, and the Lady Viola, on turning that way, discovered the outline of a man, who immediately disappeared in the forest. On coming to herself Ruby averred that the stranger bore the face and figure of Captain Warwick, whereupon the Lady Viola became as deeply agitated as her maid. Unable to account for the phenomenon, however, and placing but a slight reliance on the accuracy of her servant's vision, at that hour, she put Ruby under an injunction of silence on the subject, and retired thoughtful and troubled to her tent.

Chapter Seventeen.

THE SIX NATIONS OF THE RED MEN. DON FERDINAND MAKES AN UNEXPECTED ACQUAINTANCE. THE SPANISH CAMP.

"This land is ours—so, stand ye back!"

IT is not to be supposed that Michael Johnson was conducting the Spaniards into the immediate territories of the Six Nations without some apprehension as to the result. He well knew the character and power of the Confederacy; that from a long series of encroachments, they had become extremely jealous of intrusion; that they were well supplied with fire-arms, and were skilled in the use of their weapons; and that their courage, which even among their civilized neighbors had given them the appellation of the Romans of the West, was undoubted; but, unfortunately, he had entirely failed to make Don Manuel and Don Ferdinand understand the ground of his apprehensions. With them, savages were savages; and they could form no conception of a race of aborigines, hardier in body and mind, and approaching far nearer their own standard of soldiership, than the effeminate tribes which the warriors of Spain had so readily subjugated at the South. Johnson, therefore, was obliged to content himself with moving warily forward, while he hoped for the best; and in his calculations of success, it is certain he depended much on his own knowledge of Indian character, and his personal acquaintance and influence with the very tribes with whom they were likely to come in contact, which, though long, long

years had intervened, he doubted not, should need be, would stand him in good stead.

For some days the party kept steadily on its course, bearing gradually to the north. At length, striking a considerable branch of the Delaware River, they turned to the left, and pursued their way leisurely down its valley. Thus far they had seen little of the natives, and met with no interruption from them whatever. Here, however, they fell in with a small hunting party, with whom, as Johnson was able to converse with them in their own tongue, by prudent management, a friendly intercourse was established. A traffic ensued, which by the time they approached the Delaware itself, furnished them with a sufficient and grateful supply of the common fruits and vegetables of the season.

Latterly the face of the country had considerably changed. The hills had become more prominent, and often exposed their bald, brown heads defenseless to the storms. Their sides were covered with laurel and trees of a small growth; and a like vegetation frequently prevailed in the more elevated portions of the lowlands; while in other parts the tall white pine and hemlock stretched away in dense and extensive forests.

It was about mid-day: the Delaware was near at hand, and the Spaniards for the last hour had been cheered with an occasional glimpse of its blue waters through the trees, as they pursued their line of march, when suddenly a deer came bounding along, as though frightened or pursued, and dashed through their ranks immediately in front of their small body of horse. Excited by the occurrence, Don Ferdinand galloped in pursuit. Passing up a slight eminence covered with shrubs, and into the forest beyond, he had nearly overtaken the tired animal, when, suddenly, an Indian stood between him and his chase. The attitude of the savage was not exactly hostile, although he held his tomahawk in his hand in a menacing manner, as he uttered the single word "Wah!"

But Don Ferdinand was in no mood to be balked. His horse had nearly stopped at the unexpected apparition; but spurring him hastily forward, the native was thrown down, and the Spaniard drew up by the side of his prey. It was a heavy buck, panting and evidently exhausted from a long run; but before the chevalier could extricate his weapon to disable him, preparatory to dismounting, he felt himself firmly seized from behind; and perceived that he was surrounded by a score or more of the red men of the woods, who had come from he knew not where, and mastered him he knew not how. Quickly dragging him from his horse, and stilling his incipient cries, by a hatchet held over his head, and a knife at his throat, until they could gag him and confine his arms—feats which they performed with a singular dexterity—they placed him between two of their number, and urged him rapidly and silently forward into the deep recesses of the wood.

Don Manuel, meanwhile, having proceeded a short distance, ordered a halt to give time for the chevalier to come up; but that individual not making his appearance, Johnson, at the head of a file of men, proceeded to make search in the direction he had taken. They soon discovered his horse, which the savages had been in too much haste to secure, or had purposely disregarded, lest his hoof-marks should betray the course they had taken in their retreat; and very shortly after came up to the spot where the fray had occurred. The signs which remained, the disturbed leaves, the broken boughs, and some stains of blood on the ground, which, however, had flowed from the body of the bruised native, were sufficiently intelligible to the eye of Johnson, who at once concluded that the object of his search was a prisoner, and probably wounded. Ordering his companions to remain where they were, he advanced alone on the trail of the savages, making as he went a peculiar cry, intended to arrest their attention and bring them to a parley; but he soon convinced himself that they were no

longer in the vicinity. He perceived that they had arranged themselves in single file for a march; and having followed on for a mile or more, and remarked the haste with which they had taken their departure, he turned back and made a report of the facts to Don Manuel.

The capture of Don Ferdinand spread dismay through the party. Don Manuel, of course, would not think of abandoning the chevalier and proceeding without him; and accordingly, after a short consultation, taking into view this hostile demonstration on the part of the natives, it was determined to halt, and prepare at once for defense. A position was therefore selected, on an elevated point of land, formed by the junction of the branch whose course they had been following with the main body of the Delaware, for a sort of fortified encampment. The spot was a strong one by nature, and the Spaniards immediately set themselves at work to render it still stronger. While some cleared the surface of the ground of the laurel and underbrush which covered it, others proceeded to dig trenches and raise embankments; while others still, cut stout poles from the forest, pointed their ends, and busied themselves in surrounding the whole with a substantial line of palisades.

Don Manuel was now himself again; in a position which recalled the military experience and adventures of his early life, and infused into both mind and body a vigor to which latterly he had been a stranger. He was in the midst of his men, giving directions and cheering them on; and when night came, he had the satisfaction to see the slight works he had planned in such a state of forwardness as, he judged, to render his camp defensible in case of an attack. Following out the idea of a fortress, which, indeed, under present circumstances, seemed no more than a wise precaution, he posted sentinels at convenient distances, and made provision to have them relieved at regular intervals.

With the prospect of security, and the air of comfort which the camp assumed as the tents were got in order, the feeling of alarm subsided; fires were lighted; and the men, after the unusual fatigues of the day, and a fast which had lasted since morning, busied themselves with the preparation of refreshments. Of provisions there was no lack. Since leaving the Hudson, venison had been plenty for the taking; latterly an abundance of vegetables had been supplied by the natives, and the stores with which they had set out from the city were as yet hardly touched.

And now a little event occurred by no means devoid of excitement or danger, and of a kind common at an early period to our American forests. Several of the men were turning their spits around a large fire which had been kindled on a surface of loose rock, when one of them perceiving an object in a fissure, which he took to be a squirrel disturbed by the heat, thrust in his hand and seized it. He drew back his arm with a full-grown rattlesnake writhing around his wrist. The Spaniard gave a cry of terror and shook the serpent to the ground. But the king of the reptiles was not disposed to avail himself of his freedom to escape: he threw himself into a coil with his head in the center, elevated about a foot; and waved his rattling tail back and forth, as a note of warning to his assailants. His upper jaw was thrown back ready to strike; his tongue played like an attenuate flame; his eyes gleamed with a bewildering brilliancy which almost realized the creature's fabled power of fascination, while the variegated colors of his skin changed in their hues like a mottled cloud through which heat-lightning is flashing. The Spaniard was unfortunately wounded in the adventure, and the blood was trickling from his hand. While all the rest drew back in affright, Michael Johnson, knowing that no time was to be lost, stepped behind the monster, and placing his foot suddenly upon him, coolly seized him by the neck with

his hand, and struck off his head with a knife. Then stripping out the entrails, he bound them on the wounded limb. Whether this be a sovereign remedy for the bite of the rattlesnake, is much to be questioned; it is certain, however, that in the present instance, as well as in some other similar ones on record, the man experienced no serious inconvenience from the wound. But with the conquest over this one enemy, the Spaniards found their labor had only begun. As the heat penetrated into the rocks, another and another presented himself at the same fissure, and was dispatched; until the slain numbered several scores, and the men were tired of officiating as executioners, even upon such terrible foes.

The latter part of the evening, and the earlier portion of the following day, were devoted to a council of war, called by Don Manuel, especially to deliberate on the case of Don Ferdinand De Cassino. Michael Johnson, the Lady Viola and her maid Ruby, the doctor and the priest, Hugh O'Brady the father of Ruby, and Ambrose, valet to Don Ferdinand, were present; and the result of their deliberations was, that Johnson should undertake a mission to the Indian villages, to treat in person for the liberation of the chevalier. This was the proposition of the veteran himself; and accordingly but a very short time after its acceptance was suffered to elapse before, with his constant companion, his rifle, on his arm, he was ready to take his departure. But at the gate of the encampment he was unexpectedly brought to a halt, by the sudden apparition of Don Ferdinand himself, safe and unharmed.

The chevalier, though he had escaped bodily injury, was much flurried, and gave a very confused account of what had befallen him. He professed to have been subjected to great perils, and to have effected his escape almost miraculously, by taking advantage of the darkness. The aborigines with whom he had come in contact, he represented as effeminate and brutal; the little village where he had passed most of the

night in confinement, he described as a collection of miserable bark and log huts, some three leagues away, with a great scarcity of men, but an abundance of women and children; who had testified their pleasure at his presence by every possible species of insult, not even excepting personal violence and the indignity of blows. The chief of the settlement, he acknowledged, had rescued him from this degrading treatment, and had shown a disposition to befriend him.

But however disconnected and apocryphal Don Ferdinand's narrative of his adventures might be, it is certain that the joy at his recovery, in the Spanish camp, was hearty and unanimous. For the time, his irascible temper and petty tyrannies were forgotten in the general rejoicing that he had escaped being burned at the stake, and very possibly from furnishing the material for a banquet to his captors; and the uproarious delight of his immediate retainers, most of whom had been born on his estates in Spain, and regarded him as their hereditary lord by divine appointment, was of a nature not to be repressed. The balance of the day was, therefore, by general consent, devoted to festivity.

Chapter Eighteen.

A WILD-WOOD HUNT. FASHIONABLE AND ARTISTIC RENCOUNTER BETWEEN TWO MONARCHS OF THE FOREST.

"Alp turned him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain."

THE liberation of Don Ferdinand, even though effected by an equivocal escape, under all the circumstances was received as a happy omen in the camp of the Spaniards, and operated to dispel the gloomy forebodings which had begun to gather around them; in the territories, and surrounded as they now were, by the villages of the Six Nations, and cut off by an extensive reach of wilderness, from all communication with the white settlements. Nevertheless they determined still for some days to maintain their present position, not only that they might ascertain the settled temper of the natives, but that they might also recruit themselves and their animals, and provide means for the safe crossing of the Delaware, here a large and rapid river.

Meanwhile, Johnson did not hesitate to beat up the surrounding woods in search of a fresh supply of game; but finding the neighborhood bare, the deer having been scared away by the vicinity of the camp, he selected O'Brady and two or three of the Spaniards to accompany him, and pushed deeper into the forest. Though little apprehensive of molestation from the savages the habitual caution of the veteran in-

duced him to proceed with great watchfulness and care. He often listened intently, with his ear to the ground; explored every valley and hill critically with his eye, before venturing upon it, to detect some stray wreath of smoke; and examined every trail or footpath, and log, and stone, and patch of soft mold, for fresh prints of the moccasin. But nothing was discovered to excite alarm.

Coming at length to the foot of a range of hills, whose sides, save where huge rocks projected, or steeps of bare red earth met the sight, were covered with wide fields of laurel and other low shrubs, which, though in reality broken into clumps and traversed by delightful avenues in every direction, presented, at a little distance, the appearance of uninterrupted brakes, the party separated, and bore singly toward a designated point near the summit. Each proceeded in silence, winding his way up the eminence, through those natural paths we have mentioned, which in many places were found to be worn smooth and hard by the feet of the wild animals which frequented them.

Johnson had advanced about half way to the top of the elevation, when he became aware, from the peculiar sounds and rustling of the bushes in advance, that he was coming upon a herd of deer, and a moment after, the wide branching antlers and chiseled head of a noble buck were projected into view, while the suspicious animal snuffed the air, and turned his large and almost human eyes inquiringly around. In an instant there was the shrill crack of a rifle, and the majestic creature leaped his height in the air, and fell dead among his terrified companions. The timid beasts fled in consternation; but ignorant of the point of danger, rushed hither and thither like sheep when a wolf is suddenly discovered to be among them; and did not succeed in effecting their escape, until two more were brought down, and others wounded. These last, mutilated by the unskillful aim of the Spaniards, made

wild plunges down the rocks and through the bushes, scattering the fragrance of a thousand blossoms on the air as they went, and splashing the green leaves with streams of their purple life. One of those killed was a doe, and as she fell, gasping and quivering, her little spotted fawn stopped by her side, and submitted to be captured.

A few moments sufficed to strip the skins from the spoil: the entrails were withdrawn, and the carcasses, wrapped in their natural covering, were appended to poles for the convenience of carriage, when, satisfied with their success, and well laden with the fruits of the chase, the hunters turned in the direction of the camp.

"Here, down this valley to the right, Hugh," said Johnson, as they raised their burdens to their shoulders; "we'll circle about a little on our way back, and, may be, take a turkey, or some other nice bit, for the Lady Viola. Poor little soul! it's few enough delicacies she can have any way here in the woods. Dry biscuit, venison, and pounded corn are not such dainties but that a child may get tired of them; or even a man, who is not used to worse fare. But I've never seen the time, boys, when a decent supper wasn't to be had for the asking around these rivers. Indians and deer alike love the sweet water of the Delaware and Siskehannah. By-the-by, Hugh, you popped over that doe handsomely, as she stopped dum-founded, and did'nt know where to run. If she'd been on the bound, boy, ten to one you'd have missed her. It takes an experienced hand to bring down a deer on the bound. I guess you've fired a gun before you ever saw America?"

"It's many a year, Mike," replied O'Brady, "since I left the ould counthree. There, sure, I fired many a gun, but 'twas in the wars, and long afore I went to sarve with Don Manuel."

"Well, Hugh," said Johnson, "the next deer you aim at so surely, don't let it be a doe, my boy. The meat is not good

in the summer, and besides, Hugh, look at this little orphan! A mother should be spared."

The old man was carrying the trembling fawn under his arm at the time, with its legs slightly confined with his red bandana handkerchief. Turning to the Spaniards he continued:

"And you, lads, mustn't fire at the deer at all any more till you can larn to take better aim. God didn't place 'em in the woods here to be mangled and left to die. He put 'em here to be happy among his hills, and his flowers, and his streams, and to sarve man for food. But if we don't know enough to send a clean ball through a vital part, we've no business with them. To aim at the whole body of a deer is an abuse of our faculties and an insult to Providence."

"Should I not be a good shot?" said Hugh, recurring with evident satisfaction to the praise which Johnson had bestowed on his marksmanship. "Ten years I sarved good King George in his battles. I was but a young 'un when I first shouthered me musket. Dear, dear! to think of the grafe of me poor wife when I bade her good-bye. I seen her no more, for she's died; and nather have I looked on ould Ireland ag'in, at all, at all. Me nate girl, Ruby, when she grew up, came all the way over the sea for the love of her ould fadher, so she did, or I 'ud now be all alone on the arth."

"Well, Hugh," said Johnson, "the world is full of sufferin' and sorrow, and goes on jest in the way you've been telling, so far as I know. It seems hard sometimes, but I s'pose it's all for the best. I've seen trouble in my day, too; but God's will be done. 'Tis not for me to complain, or to forget his marcies."

The old man drew his bony hand across the end of his nose, as though to wipe away the recollection of other days, and swelling out his chest with a deep-drawn breath, quickened his step, as he commenced humming an old song in a

low tone, between singing and whistling, as was his custom when occupied in thought. The little party proceeded some distance in silence, which was at length interrupted by a sudden start, and an exclamation of the single word "Whew!" from the veteran. With a gesture he fastened his companions in their tracks, and slightly opening his mouth, placed his hand to his ear, in an attitude of deep attention. In a moment the low, deep growl which had caught his ear became audible to the others.

"It is a bear," said he, in a tone hardly above a whisper. "But I never heard one make that doleful noise at the sight or the smell of a man. No, no; she's afraid of something besides us, boys—that's sartain. When I——"

A moaning shriek from an opposite hill cut short the sentence. It was a plaintive sound, not heavy, but long and shrill, like the cry of human distress. The Spaniards shrunk back in terror. Johnson coolly examined his priming, and directing the men to deposit their burdens on the ground, cautiously led the way to a point that overlooked the uneven surface of a narrow, but long and deep valley, thinly covered with trees. Hardly had they become stationary, screening themselves from observation by a body of thick underbrush, when the quick eye of the old hunter caught a view of the animal he had so unhesitatingly pronounced a bear. It was indeed a she-bear, of the largest dimensions, making her way with much haste up the valley, and followed by a quarter-grown cub with all the speed that it could compass. As she advanced she frequently outran her offspring, when, slackening her pace for the little animal to come up, she cast wistful looks behind, and sent forth a low, harsh growl, as it seemed, half in fear and half in defiance. But now a startling cry, louder and fiercer and nearer than the other, rang through the valley. It had its effect on the bear. She stopped suddenly, as though convinced that there was no longer safety in flight,

and stood for a moment rubbing her nose affectionately against her cub. But another of those fearful shrieks started her again; she proceeded a few paces and raised herself against the trunk of a tree, as though to ascend, when, looking back at her young one, she tore the bark with her claws, and again started on. Her course, meanwhile, had been bringing her much nearer the spot where the hunters lay concealed, when Hugh O'Brady, eager since the compliment to his gunnery to exhibit his skill, brought his musket to his shoulder.

"Down with your popgun!" said Johnson, in a low tone. "Would you throw away your charge at this distance, without knowin' the strength of the inemy? Wait till the painter comes, and see that your courage keeps up then as high as 'tis now."

The bear at length came to a halt on a small level plat, which, for a few feet around, was clear of trees and shrubs, and covered mainly with a red moss, and commenced throwing up the soft mold with her paws. Industriously she labored, and in a few moments succeeded in excavating a trench sufficiently capacious for her purpose; when, rolling her back into the cavity, which covered two thirds of her body, she awaited the approach of her antagonist.

"Hooraw!" exclaimed Johnson, with great animation; "I've heard tell of that before, but never see it myself. It's a rare thing that a bear knows enough to cover her shoulders from the spring of a painter."

The panther now appeared, bounding down the hillside and along the valley like a cat, occasionally smelling the earth and lashing up his wrath with his tail, and tearing the saplings and the trees in the exhibition of his wild and furious antics. He approached with caution, and it was some little time before he discovered the position of his enemy. When he had sufficiently reconnoitered, however, he bounded with inconceivable agility toward her; but when it seemed that the

next spring would have brought him on his foe, he suddenly changed his purpose, wheeled, and threw himself upon the body of a branching oak near at hand, which he ascended with the ease and dexterity of a cat, and planted himself upon a large limb which extended in the direction of his fortified antagonist.

The bear, meanwhile, kept her position with admirable composure. She lay in her trough, with her legs resting on her body, as perfectly motionless as though she had been dead. The panther eyed her keenly for a moment, whipping his sides slowly with his long tail, when, settling closely to the limb on which he sat, with a leap he appeared midway in the air coming down upon her. Then the body of the bear seemed to shrink into half its size, the surface of her paws expanded, showing the rows of fearful weapons with which nature had armed her, while her legs were contracted to the utmost, to give space for a more effective stroke. She received her terrible opponent on her breast, and sent him back many feet into the air, with a force little inferior to that of his descent. He struck on the ground like a log, and for a time seemed stunned; but soon dragging himself to his feet, he gave a startling yell, and with little abatement of his former agility regained his position in the tree. There he remained for some minutes to recover himself, or, perhaps, in doubt as to the policy of making another assault on an enemy whose artificial system of defense had placed him on a very unequal footing. But shortly, again, he sprung forward, like an embodied thunderbolt, his claws and jaws extended, and his eyes flashing with rage. The bear received him as before, but not, in some respects, with equal success. The panther had descended nearly head foremost, and before her feet could bear against his body, he had grappled her throat with his teeth. Still the struggle was but momentary. The great strength of the bear, together with her advantageous position,

enabled her to force her antagonist from his hold; but so tenacious was his grasp, that her whole power only sufficed to throw him from her. He sunk on the ground evidently exhausted, if not disabled, and lay for some minutes without attempting to rise, while dark-red spots were plainly discernible, as they rapidly enlarged on his abdomen and breast.

During the latter part of the conflict, Johnson and his party had emerged from the bushes which previously concealed them, and now stood unnoticed within twenty yards of the combatants.

"Hugh," said Johnson, "less end the creaters, and put them out of their misery. Ill take the painter, and do you let drive into the bear's heart. Mind and aim low."

But at that instant the fading but still terrible eye of the panther caught the bear's whelp, which till then had stood disregarded a few paces behind its dam. Partially raising himself, the dying but unconquerable animal collected his waning strength, and with a bound cleared the mother and grappled with her cub. The young one made but a feeble resistance; it sent forth a cry for help, and that cry was its last; while exulting in his revenge, the panther crushed its bones between his jaws, and raising it in his claws shook it aloft; and as its mother came up to the rescue, threw it on the ground at her feet, a lifeless and lacerated clod. But the king of the American woods was also at his last gasp. The party who stood regarding the scene, with mingled feelings of interest and horror, had noticed in his final effort for mastery or revenge, that the blood was streaming from his breast, and his entrails dragging on the ground; and before the enraged mother could reach him, he fell dead by the side of her whelp.

Johnson and O'Brady still stood with their pieces elevated, forgetting in the suddenness and excitement of the catastrophe to discharge them; but now the former with much energy exclaimed:

"Let have into the varmint, Hugh! We'll finish the business ourselves. Why, it beats all nater and the Indians to boot!"

Aroused by the noise from the contemplation of the slain, the old bear turned, and receiving both balls in her forehead, sunk lifeless between her antagonist and her offspring.

The party advanced to the scene of combat; and Johnson, drawing his hunting-knife across the throat of the bear, stretched out the dead animals on the moss to satisfy the curiosity of his companions. He exhibited their enormous tusks and claws on his finger; and feeling through the shaggy coat of the bear, he declared her to be good meat, and her skin fit for the couch of an emperor. But it now became evident that the Spaniards, who were standing by, were laboring under some singular hallucination. They cast furtive glances to the right and the left, peering through the trees and upon the hills around, with every mark of affright still stamped on their swarthy faces.

"What's the matter?" inquired Johnson.

"Where are the Indians?" said they.

"Indians!" returned he. "There's no Indians about that I know of. The noise you heard on the hills was the nateral cry of the painter. I've heard them from the old Connecticut to the Massippi, and, for the matter of that, to the Stunny Mountains; and from the Big Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico; and they always make a plaint that's terrible to man, something like the crying of a child; and again, sharper and louder, like the shrieks of a woman under the tomahawk. Were you scart, boys? Well, I don't wonder. In the year '35, coming from Fort Swago, Hendrick the Mohawk was with me, and we camped for the night at the outlet of the Neida Lake. But the venomous beasts prowled so close around us with their hungry yells, that we didn't sleep a wink all night. We had enough to do to keep our circle of fires burning, to

frighten them off. Hendrick peppered one, though. We were breaking some dead limbs for the fires, when we saw a pair of balls glistening in the dark, like a couple of candles, or rather like two glowing coals, a little ways off; and I told Hendrick I would just step back and get my gun. But he grunted no, in Mohawk, and let fly his tomahawk between the shining lights. Indians have the gift of the tomahawk, that's sartain. Well, we knew the painter was ended, for we heard the cracking of the dry twigs, the rustling of the leaves, and his choked yells, as he bounded about in his death-struggle. But we didn't go to him till morning; and then we found the hatchet settled clean and smooth into the creater's head, so that you could'nt see nothing on't but the handle, and a bit as big as my thumb-nail of the pipe-bowl."

It now became necessary to provide means for the transportation of the additional spoils to the camp, especially the heavy bear, whose meat was esteemed by the natives, and those accustomed to its use, as a great luxury; and while O'Brady and the others went forward with such portion as they could carry, Johnson tarried behind to await the arrival of further aid. Left to himself the veteran sat down on a log, and remained for some time wrapped in his own reflections. At length, rising, he walked leisurely back and forth in the damp valley, whose springs, shut out from the sun, trickled ever over moist earth, and whose atmosphere, though cool and fragrant, was ever hung with shadows, like the gossamer haze of twilight. His ancient rifle, which looked as weather-beaten as himself, and which he had managed to retain, often at a great sacrifice of other comforts, through all the vicissitudes of long years, and wounds, and captivity, lay on his arm; and occasionally he regarded it with a look, such as one bestows on an old and cherished friend. Passing up the opposite hill, he found a more open prospect. The trees were sparse on the eminence, and he was greeted with the full light

and warmth of the sun. The Delaware lay off at his right, with its transparent waters, and the green fringes of its curved and winding banks; and on his left, though at a greater distance, the tributary which came in from the east. At their junction was the encampment, and its smoke was plainly to be seen.

The old man surveyed the beautiful prospect of river, vale, and hill, and his eye brightened. "Here are God's works," said he, "and they are peace. How different are man's!" But gradually contracting his vision to nearer objects, the expression of his countenance suddenly changed.

A dead Indian was lying almost at his very feet, partially concealed by a clump of laurel which grew by the spot. The flies were buzzing about in swarms; and Johnson, waving his hand over the body, drove them away; and pushing back the bushes, he gazed earnestly on the relic of humanity. The body was that of a robust native in the prime of life. He was reclining partly on his side, and a large stain of blood was on his back; and the dark tide had run down on the ground, and formed a pool which was now dry, leaving a deep purple color on the leaves, and a profusion of thin red scales, as the crimson fluid had evaporated in the sun.

Johnson had witnessed death in a variety of forms: on the domestic couch, surrounded by weeping friends; on the battle-field, amidst fire, and shrieks, and blood; but never when it found its way so readily to his heart. *There* men died of course; but here lay the poor Indian, in the deep silence of the forest, dead, but no one to tell his story. No friends had wailed over him, and his death-song remained unsung.

Why this victim lay thus exposed, and how he came to his untimely end, the old hunter was far from imagining. But he was now aroused by the shouts of those who had arrived from the camp; and calling them to him, he pointed out the marvel.

"If I were dead on any of their hills," said he, "they would give me a decent burial."

But Johnson was well acquainted with the feelings and habits of the Indians, and especially with their great anxiety always to reclaim their dead. Getting, therefore, his companions to help him, he covered the body with green boughs and poles, to preserve it from the beasts of the forest; and peeling the bark from a shaft of pine, he cut some rude characters on it with his knife, thrust it upright in the ground, and hung on it one of the moccasins of the dead Indian.

Chapter Nineteen.

A CAMP-FIRE YARN, EMBRACING SOME INCIDENTS NECESSARY TO BE KNOWN IN THE EARLY LIFE OF JOHNSON.

"The dead leaves strew the forest walk,
And withered are the pale wild flowers."

EVENING was at hand as Johnson returned from the hunt; and very shortly thereafter he was summoned to the quarters of Don Manuel. He found Don Ferdinand there in a condition of extreme restlessness. The chevalier was urging the propriety of throwing out an advance corps on to the waters of the Susquehanna, a distance of some six or eight leagues, to select a spot for another camp, and place it in a condition for the reception of the party. He proposed that the expedition should depart in the night, and that Johnson and himself should head it. Don Manuel evidently regarded the proposition with favor, and Johnson felt no disposition to oppose it. The old man, however, found a cloud resting on his mind through which he could not penetrate. Still the measure proposed seemed no more than a wise precaution. Their present position was a strong one, and he could not doubt, even in case of an attack, and with a force somewhat diminished, that Don Manuel would be abundantly able to defend it. A forced march of a day over the mountain range that divided the two rivers, would bring them at any time to the contemplated post in advance. There, in case of a hostile disposition on the part of the natives, some preparations for their security, especially for the safety of the Lady Viola, seemed very necessary. The affair was accordingly consid-

ered settled, and very shortly thereafter Don Ferdinand retired, leaving Johnson alone with Don Manuel and his daughter.

"And now, good Michael," said the Lady Viola, "if you are not too much fatigued by the labors of the chase, will you oblige me with another of those old tales with which you used to amuse me in Mexico, and again on the ocean, when we lay becalmed? They have a charm for me which I can not express, and I must always feel grateful for the pleasure you have thus afforded me."

The old man was silent for some moments. At length he said:

"I'm sad to-night, daughter, and that, I fear, is not a favorable mood for story-telling; and still, I can't well refuse any thing to your innocent face. But, of late, I've thought much of old times, when I was young like you; and of the hopes I had then, which are gone. I'm now old and gray; and it seems like a dream when my rosy boy hung upon my knee, and my wife stepped busily around our home."

"Why, Johnson," said Don Manuel, "I did not suppose you ever had a family. I never heard you mention it before."

"It's rarely I speak of it, sir," replied Johnson, as he rested his forehead on his hand.

Although a tinge of sadness was frequently discernible in the countenance and expressions of Michael Johnson, as though memory rested uneasily on some of the scenes it recalled, yet such shadows would remain but for a moment, and were forgotten in his uniform cheerfulness of manner. The father and daughter now felt, however, as they regarded his time-worn form, and the emotions which he could not altogether repress, that he had griefs which they dreamed not of; and that his present feelings were of too sacred a nature for the intrusion of either inquiry or consolation; and the Lady Viola, taking her guitar, struck into a plaintive air, and

kindly sought to soothe him by the unobtrusive sympathies of music. After a silence of some minutes, Don Manuel remarked:

"I think you have told me that you are a native of one of the northern colonies?"

"Yes," replied the old man, "I was born in Massachusetts; and there I spent the fore part of my life, both youth and manhood, saving a trip to the West now and then, to trade with the Indians. There it was that I married; and there I should have lived to this day, it's altogether probable, if I hadn't lost my wife, which broke up my family and spoilt my home. But I can't say any thing about Lucy to-night. If I talk, I must talk of my little boy; for I've hardly thought of any thing else since we landed in America. It's marvelous, after I've given him up for dead, for so many long years, that of late, sleeping or waking, on the hills, or by the valley streams, he stands afore me, jest as I last see him on the banks of the Ginessee. It's here," continued he, placing his hand on his heart; "but it seems, at times, as though he's actually before my eyes, with his deer-skin clothes and beady moccasins, and the wampum belt that Hendrick the Mohawk, gave him. Oh, he had a ruddy face, and his laughing blue eyes were like Lucy's."

Johnson paused in his retrospection; but catching the anxious and sympathizing looks of the Lady Viola, he proceeded:

"It is childish, perhaps, to plague you with the fancies of an old head like mine, daughter; but you asked me for a story, and if you wont let the simple narrative grieve you—for your young heart ought not to know any thing of sorrow yet, for this many a day—I'll tell you how I lost my little boy.

"Well, Lucy was dead; no matter how, to-night; and little Paul was three years old, or thereabouts. They always called his father a proper son of Ishmael, so far as roving was consarned; and the few years that Lucy lived, after we were

married, was the only time of my life when the neighbors would allow that I was tolerable steady. Somehow or other, the great woods, jest as God made 'em, were always pleasant to me; and I can't deny that from my youth up I had an uncommon love for hunting and trading with the Indians.

"Well, when Lucy was not there, somehow, every thing changed, and in the whole town I couldn't think of any thing I cared about, so I took to my old ways ag'in, and started West. I couldn't think of separatin' from Paul, and so I took him with me. At Albany, as I had done years before, I loaded a canoe with powder, lead, and blankets, and so on, for a trip to the Mohawk villages, and proceeded up the river. Little Paul was all the real comfort I had. He would help his daddy paddle the canoe, and try to imitate all my actions; and we hadn't been long among the Mohawks before he'd send an arrow with the best lad of his size in the tribe.

"The Indians received me in a friendly manner, after their way, and helped me to refit my old wigwam. I gave them my notions for their deer-skins and furs, which I sent down to Albany, or sold to the traders; and finding their way of life agreeable, I used to go with them in their hunting and trapping expeditions, and finally became as one of them. They adopted me into their tribe; and I must say for them that they're a pleasant people to their friends, though very terrible, indeed, in their revenge on their enemies. Months passed off in this way, and a whole year; and by that time, I guess, I'd got to be a pretty good Indian myself; and Paul, with his bow and arrows and blanket, if you didn't see his hair or his eyes, couldn't hardly be told from Wisset, Hendrick's son, who was about the same age.

There was one Indian in the tribe who always acted sulky when I was about, as though he bore me a grudge. I never knew what for, only I was white; and John the Wild Cat hated all whites. He was a warrior and a chief, and bold as

he was treacherous and cruel. We were jest about starting for the Siskehannah on a long hunt, and to trap for the musk-rat and otter; and Hendrick took me one side, and cautioned me against John.

"'Son,' said he, 'the Wild Cat has claws, and he watches the course of the White Eagle (for this, you must know, was the name the Mohawks had given me). Many summers ago his squaw and his little ones were scalped by the Mohigans, and white men were with them. Let the eye of the White Eagle be open, and his wing in the clouds, that no beast may spring upon him.'

"He said no more; but knowin' that an Indian's warnin' wasn't for nothing, I detarmined to keep a close eye on John. He was one of our party; and all went on smooth enough for some time, and I saw nothing to excite suspicion until he moved his traps from a pond to a stream where mine were set. I didn't like his actions, but said nothing till my traps began to be stole; and he had blocked up the paths both above and below me with his'n, totally surrounding me, so that my chance for catching any thing was jest good for nothing at all. Then I told him to clear away, on one side or the other, and give me fair play; and he replied by asking me if I had ever felt the claws of a wild cat.

"I answered him in his own style; that the talons of the eagle are strong, and he flies high above the mountain where the wild cat yells, and laughs at him.

"I was a little too fast, I own, in my reply. I ought to have governed my temper better; but John had tormented me day after day, until I was clean beyond all bounds of patience. He grappled his knife in his hand at my answer, but seeing I was ready for him, he burst into a laugh.

"'Yes, the eagle is strong,' said he; 'but is the Yengee an eagle? If he has wings, they are like the squirrel's, that carry him down instead of up. Is he strong?

So is the Yengee hog that the wild cat eats. I spit upon you.'

"Thus saying, he turned sullenly away as though to go off; and I thought of applying to the head chief of the hunt for justice agi'n him; but there is little of law among the Indians but the gun and the tomahawk, as I soon found; for while I was stooped over fixin' my traps, a ball whistled by my head, and glanced off upon the water. I don't know how it happened that John missed me, for when I looked up, he was running not more than six or eight rods off, and he was reckoned a good shot. I raised my rifle, and hollered after him that I was about to shoot the Wild Cat in the back.

"At this he stopped short; and turning round, folded his arms on his breast, and bid me fire.

"I have had the beaver, afore now, look me in the face as I was aiming my gun at it, and raaly it seemed as though the dumb beast knowed what I was at, and I have waited till it turned its head away before I shot; and now, when a feller-creater stood in the same place, I couldn't find it in my heart at all to do it. 'Twasn't possible.

"'John,' said I, 'what hurt have I done you, that you use me as you would a mink when you wanted its skin?'

"He dropped his blanket from his shoulders, and pointed with his finger to his naked breast, as much as to say, Take your reckoning there.

"'I will not kill you, John,' said I, 'take your life; but let the Wild Cat, whose ears are cut off, and whose tail drags on the ground, go to some distant hill, where his tribe will not be frightened at his squalls, nor see his shame.'

"He did not move; and after a minute answered, 'John will die.'

"'I will not have your life,' said I. 'Are you not now my captive, my slave, and do you refuse to obey me? Let the Wild Cat go before he becomes a squaw, and earn him a new name among the Hurons of the Lakes.'

"He turned slowly and walked off; for by Indian custom, as he'd attempted my life, and I'd spared his, when it was in my power, he belonged to me, and I could dispose of him as I liked.

"When he was gone, as it still wanted several hours of sundown, I put back on to the hills in search of game, cheering myself up with the hope that my troubles with the Wild Cat were ended, and, as I thought, very happily to myself; so that I didn't return to the camp till about dark.

"I forgot if I told you that I took little Paul with me to the Siskehannah. I never could bear to be away from him more than a day or two at a time; and now, when I left the wigwams to hunt, or look after my traps, he frequently staid behind with the squaws and played with the other children. That night, as I got home, I raaly think I wanted to see him more than common; and the first thing I did was to look after him. But he was not to be found. Still I s'posed he was somewhere about, and wasn't alarmed, as I know of, but went to inquiring for him from one to another. The squaws hadn't missed him. Finally, come to think back, the last that any one remembered of him, he was at play, about an hour before, in a little grove of alders ten or a dozen rods from the camp, along with Wild Cat. Then I trembled, and run for the alders, and got the Indians to help me, and we searched through the woods all around, and I expected every minute to come across his murdered body; but we searched in vain.

"We returned to the camp before the moon was up—may be about ten o'clock at night; and I called the chief men and warriors together and told them the events of the day—all that had taken place between me and Wild Cat. They were very feelin' and friendly toward me; and no one tried to uphold Wild Cat at all; and most of them were furious to pursue him and put him to death; but after a good deal of deliberation, it didn't seem as if any thing further could be done

before morning, on account of the difficulty in getting on to his track, as he had evidently taken a great deal of pains to conceal the course he had gone. The time we spent a talkin' seemed like an age to me; and a still further delay was dreadful; but when I come to think on't, 'twas all right. As for me, however, I could not think of rest; so with a torch I kept circling round the camp till near daylight, when I found an arrow that I had made for Paul the day before. It lay in the direction of the white settlements on the Mohawk, and I didn't know what to make of it. I couldn't discover any tracks. 'However,' said I, 'Paul must have been here;' and so I kept on. There was a little brook near by, and I held my light to the ground, and examined the banks up and down two or three times over. Though it was in the beginnin' of winter, there wasn't any snow yet, and the weather was still mild and the ground soft. Around the water there were foot-prints enough in every direction. After lookin' among them for a good while, I finally perceived one on the soft mold, which, from its size and the impression of the mocassin, I knew was Paul's. I examined farther among the large tracks, and soon detected Wild Cat's. From this point I made my start, in pursuit of my terrible enemy.

"The Indians had taught me to follow the track of a man, as the hound pursues its game; still, until broad day, I got on but slowly, for 'twas not often that John had left behind him any positive foot-marks."

"Were I not so deeply interested in the recovery of your child," remarked Don Manuel, "I should like very well to know how it is that the Indians will pursue a foe through the wilderness by his trail, with so much certainty and expedition."

"That is a faculty easier larnt than explained," replied Johnson. "The Indian, in fleeing, avoids the bare ground all that's possible. He jumps from log to log, and stone to stone, wades up and down the streams, for the running water leaves

no print of his foot; doubles on his own tracks, walks backward, and resorts to a hundred other contrivances to cover up his path. His pursuers are equally on the alert. It is a settled maxim with the Indians that a creater the size of a man can't get through the woods without leaving marks of some kind. If the ground is hard, and no track, the foot has still left an impression on the dry leaves, or among the green weeds, discoverable to the ixperienced eye of the red man. At every step a twig has been bent or broke, a hanging bough displaced, or a leaf severed; and they can tell the time, almost to a minute, since it was done. If a trail suddenly comes to an end, a stone is found off on one side, to which the object of pursuit has jumped; or he has swung himself off on a hanging limb or vine; or he has climbed a tree and let himself down on the other side. If he has taken to a stream, they foller the banks up and down, until they find where he came out, and then foller on. It's the hardest thing in nater to escape them."

Don Manuel apologized for the interruption, and thanked Johnson for the explanation he had given; whereupon the veteran proceeded with his narrative:

"Though I could find no more prints of the little feet that I most cared to see, I still felt sartain that I was on the right track. Gradually the trail bent around to the northwest, and struck off in an Indian line. I couldn't think of waiting for any of the rest, so I marked signs on the trees that they would understand, and pushed on. Something past noon I came to the place where Wild Cat had made his first halt, and judged I should be able to hold out till I overtook him. About an hour after dark, however, I lost the trail; and though I had a good torch, I could not possibly recover it; besides, from agitation and fatigue, I couldn't walk without staggerin'; so I laid myself down and rested till mornin'.

"When the day broke, though I hadn't slept much, I felt

better, and in a short time got on the track ag'in. About nine o'clock, say, I found I was gaining on my enemy, for I came where he had made his second halt and camped for the night.

"But I perceive I am getting too particular, daughter, and shall tire you both out with my long yarn."

"No, no, good Michael," returned the Lady Viola. "You can not conceive how deeply I am interested for your dear little boy. Do not cut it short; we sympathize with you in every word."

"I was able to discover the spot," continued the old man, "where my little Paul had sat and eat his supper, and where he had slept; and the ground was still moist with his tears. Near by I found his little pocket-handkerchief, where he had no doubt looped it, though so young, for a sign. This is it," said Johnson, taking a small white handkerchief from his bosom, marked with the name of Lucy. The Lady Viola took it in her hand in silence, and a drop of pearl fell from her eye. The veteran proceeded:

"A little way on, in crossing a swamp, I found the plain prints of his moccasins in the mud, and the tracks looked as fresh as though they were but jest made. Accordingly I pushed on with good courage, and something after noon came to the Ginisee River, jest where there is a sharp bend, and the rocks are piled one upon another as high as a tall tree. Rivers had not stopped me, and I was looking for a place to get down the steep bank, when Wild Cat, carrying Paul in his arms, suddenly appeared in sight, and not more than six or eight rods off. It was jest at the bend in the river I mentioned, and we came up nearly facing each other, both on the high bluffs, but with a great gap between us. John got his eye on me the same instant that I see him, but he did not run, for he knew my rifle too well, and in a moment I had leveled it at him. His Indian cunning taught him a better way. He

sprung for'ard to the edge of the rocks, and holding my child in his hands between us, so as in a manner to shield himself from my aim, held him dangling over the gulf, which was so deep that I could hardly see down to its black and ragged bottom. My boy was crying and pale, and seeing me he screamed for his father to help him. It turned dark to me, and my gun fell at my feet.

"When John see he had prevailed, he took Paul down, and broke into a taunting laugh.

"'Paul shall be the son of the Wild Cat,' said he, 'and the White Eagle must go back as he came. He can not fly swift enough to save his young one from the rocks;' and he pointed down the precipice at his feet. 'The White Eagle must go back.'

"'John! John!' said I, 'give me Paul and I will go back. I will go anywhere you say—to my own people, leave the woods and the Indians, and never come back. I'll give you my guns, my blankets, my traps, and all I have in the world for Paul.'

"Wild Cat shook his head. 'The bad spirit gives lies to the white man,' said he. 'The young eagle must forget how to fly, and learn to jump like the Wild Cat; and the old one must go back.'

"'Oh, say not so, good John!' I replied in my misery. 'I tell you no lie. I swear by the Great Spirit—by the sun and the earth, that all I have shall be yours, only give me back my child.'

"I started as though to find some way to get to him. He waved his hand. 'Come not,' he said; 'the White Eagle must come no farther. If he crosses this water, the claws of the Wild Cat shall tear the heart of his young one. If he stirs from the rock where he stands, till the great orb sleeps, his nestling shall die.'

"He gave me no time to say more, but, with his eye fixed

on me, retreated backward; and I then heard my darling boy's voice for the last time, as with wild and choking shrieks he cried to his father to save him.

"I believe I was about crazy for a while. I lay down on the rocks and had strange fancies in my head. Lucy came to me, dressed like an angel of light, and told me not to mourn, for I should see Paul ag'in before I died. She bathed my temples with a fragrant dew, and sung me to sleep with such music as they have in heaven.

"When I waked up she was gone. I felt refreshed, but a great fury came over me as I discovered John and Paul in a canoe on the river. I raged like a madman for a little time, but I see 'twas of no use, and quieting down I stretched out my arms to God, and told him I'd trust him with Paul, even in the hands of Wild Cat. I set down on the rock ag'in, and was pretty much stupid, I should think, till about night, when the Indians came up.

"My Mohawk friends were eager to foller on in pursuit, but I was of a different opinion. I thought it would only endanger Paul. Doubtless we might overtake and kill the Wild Cat, but I knew that cruel savage too well to believe that he would ever suffer my boy to fall into our hands alive. The Mohawks finally gave way, and we camped on the river-bank for the night.

"On the following mornin' I colored my skin the hue of copper, painted my face, shaved my head, and changed into a complete Indian, determined to dog my enemy secretly and alone. My friends, with the best wishes, bid me good-bye and returned home. I crossed the Ginesee, but John had taken such precautions to conceal his course that I couldn't track him. I had watched him till he landed on the opposite bank, but now discovered that he had taken to the water ag'in with his canoe, and on that wide river all trace of him was lost. Judging most likely that he had laid his course for the

country of the Hurons, I cautiously bent my steps in that direction. I crossed the Nigara, and visited most of the tribes around the Great Lakes, but could learn nothing of him, and in two or three months returned to the Mohawk Valley.

"The next spring Hendrick sent out spies to the distant tributaries of the Six Nations, among the Hurons, and many other far-off tribes. It was at last owned by the Hurons that Wild Cat had been with them. At length he was met by one of our scouts in a distant hunting-party of that nation. He sent back his answer and defiance to me in these words:

"'The White Eagle passed the lake-stream and his nestling is dead. Wild Cat goes behind the Great River. If the White Eagle darkens his path he shall follow on the trail of his son.'

"Nothin' more," continued the old hunter, "has been heard from either to this day. For years I made it my home with the Mohawks, but all my comfort was gone. I became as one of them, and joined them in their wars and their hunts. In every distant expedition I was sure to be one. I have roamed through the great forests, and all America over; have hunted and trapped on the frozen lakes of the north, and on the rivers far west of the Massippi. In my long wandering life there has been little aim that any one could see, still in all I've had a secret hope that I might yet learn somethin' more of Wild Cat and my little Paul. Such was the secret arrand which led me among the Indian tribes of Mexico, where I had the happiness to make the acquaintance of your noble father. I s'pose it is the streams and the hills that I used to see that call these things of late so much into my mind, and set the whole afore me ag'in as fresh as a deed of yesterday; if it is not, God help me! I know not what it is."

The old man covered his face with his hands, and for some time sat silent and motionless, save a slight tremor of the limbs. At length he arose to depart, when Don Manuel said:

"I am not callous to the feelings of a parent, friend Johnson, and you have my deepest sympathy. Notwithstanding the lapse of years, and Wild Cat's message, I think you have still grounds for hope. It is not the Indian custom to adopt a prisoner, especially a child, and then destroy him. The object of the savage was probably to discourage pursuit."

"He could not—he could not have harmed him!" exclaimed the Lady Viola, with much feeling, as she took the veteran kindly by the hand. "Even the cruel revenge of Wild Cat could not do a deed like that."

The gray-haired father shook his head. He answered not, but with a strong effort regained his composure and left the tent with his usual firm step.

Chapter Twenty.

AN ALARM. CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN A FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

"The Indian whoop is on the distant hill,
His war-cry shakes the frightened summer air."

WHEN Johnson found himself in the open air, he paused and cast his eyes over the whole visible heavens, where not a cloud was moving to intercept the twinkling of the stars, save the almost imperceptible mists that ascended from the camp, and some faint shadows which quietly stole over the tops of the trees in the distance, betokening to his experienced eye the vicinity of the Indian fires. Feeling ill at ease, and in his own consciousness, that more watchfulness was requisite than the circumstances which surrounded them would seem to indicate, he proceeded along the line of palisades, spoke each sentinel at his post, and examined critically into the condition of the encampment. Satisfying himself that all was well, he at length retired to his own tent, and wrapping himself in his great-coat, lay down on his blanket until the rising of the moon should call him up to lead the expedition proposed by Don Ferdinand, which it had been determined to get under way that very night. Three or four hours later, the small party detailed for the purpose, headed by the old man and the chevalier, silently let themselves out of the fortress, and proceeded on their way.

The morning came bright and cheerily to the Spanish camp, and Don Manuel, in pursuance of some suggestions made by

Johnson, turned his attention to the strengthening of his defenses. While a portion of his men were engaged on a trench, as a support to the most exposed part of the pickets, others proceeded to the erection of a small building of logs, in the center of the inclosure, for the better accommodation and security of the Lady Viola. By the middle of the afternoon these were nearly completed; when suddenly each soldier dropped his spade or axe, and seized his weapons. Cries, faint and distant, came down on the breeze from the north, but of such a character as to alarm and horrify every member of the encampment. The wild terrifying war-whoop, always enough to curdle the blood, and then heard by the Spaniards for the first time, rung through the valley.

The first idea, of course, was of an attack, and each soldier hurried to his post. By the aid of his glass, meanwhile, Don Manuel was able to discover on the brow of a hill at about a mile's distance the point from which the sounds proceeded. A party of savages were there assembled for the celebration of a powwow, or for some purpose or demonstration the nature of which he could not understand. They leaped about with singular dexterity, brandishing their knives and tomahawks in each other's faces, and uttering, as they performed their antics, those extraordinary yells which had at first alarmed the encampment. Don Manuel thought he was able to perceive from some of their attitudes and gestures, that a portion at least of their apparent rage was directed toward the Spanish quarters. In about an hour the strange exhibition was brought to a close, when bearing off on a sort of rude litter the body of a man who, Don Manuel concluded, had been killed or disabled in the performance of their ferocious rites, they disappeared.

This occurrence very naturally left an unpleasant impression on the mind of Don Manuel: he found himself oppressed with anxiety, and when the labors of the day were closed, and the twilight began to scatter its mists over the valleys and hills

which surrounded his little camp in the wilderness, threatened as he feared by savage hordes, and cut off from human succor, he was still in the open air, passing from one point of the defenses to another, cautioning and encouraging the sentinels at their posts; and though cool and collected, for he was a brave man, his black eye, even when he could no longer see with any distinctness, was often turned inquiringly in the direction of the northern hills. As he did not seem disposed to retire to his quarters, the Lady Viola joined him. She was robed in her mantelet and hat, and brought forth her father's cloak on her arm, to shield him from the chill of night. As she placed the garment on his shoulders, he imprinted a kiss on her fair brow, and kindly took her hand.

"I hope that the unusual displays of the afternoon," said he, "have not frightened my child?"

"The daughter of a soldier, I have heard it said," returned the Lady Viola, "should not know fear; and still, methinks, there are sounds in nature more agreeable to the ear and more congenial to the heart than the howlings of those forest men. Would that good Michael were here to tell us the meaning of what we have seen and heard this day."

"Michael Johnson is wise and prudent," said Don Manuel, "and particularly learned in every thing relating to the ceremonies and customs of these red men. Were he here he would doubtless be able to satisfy our curiosity. I think we can hardly need him for any thing beyond, for we have no evidence that those singular proceedings of the savages have any relation whatever to us. In any event, we are well armed, have a strong position, and can defend ourselves."

"True, father, and the faithful sentinels are at their posts: There is therefore no need that you longer keep watch in person at the outworks, and after the toil of this day you require refreshment and rest. Let us go in from the night air, and I will see if my guitar still has the quality of music in it."

Don Manuel replied not, and Viola continued:

"The whippoorwill is singing his farewell to the day. How sweet and plaintive! I love his notes; they seem the echo of a human chord, to harmonize with the feelings, the hopes and fears and sorrows, which would appear to be the common portion of humanity."

"And are you then so sad-hearted, my daughter?"

"Oh, no, not sad-hearted," said Viola, quickly. "I was not thinking of myself."

"You had in part, perhaps, your father in your mind," said Don Manuel. "I might, it is true, with very great propriety, blend the farewell of an exile to his native land with the strains of that melancholy bird."

"Oh, say not so, father! Indulge not in such fancies. Our own sweet home we will see again; and you shall lead me, and again I will weep on the grave of my mother."

"Viola!"

"Father!"

"Your mother is a saint in heaven—there, or there, or there, among some of those bright stars. Here, in the presence of her pure spirit, I must speak to you to-night of what I have delayed too long. I can no longer withhold. I must speak to you plainly of my affairs, and urge you to your duty. Oh, my dear child! Were you but safe and happy, how gladly would I rest with her!"

"Father," said Viola, softly, while her eye stole fearfully and timidly to his, like a gem just melting in a bed of coral, "you wrong your daughter. What could Viola be without her father?"

"Daughter," said Don Manuel, with emphasis, "I fear I am wrong to excite you thus; but it is now both proper and necessary that you should understand my situation fully, and the motives which influence me. I shall hardly see Spain again. Life and safety I no longer value but for your sake.

Fortune, I now have none. The wreck of it was buried in the ocean. The blow that drove me beyond the power of my country, divided me from my estates. Our broad Andalusian lands are seized; they are in the grasp of the spoiler; we have no home. The grave of your mother is in the keeping of strangers; who, could I return, might contest my right to her bones, and tax me a pistole for the privilege of moistening the sod that covers her with my tears. Nay, interrupt me not, but hear. My only child need not, must not fall so low. Her worth, her beauty, and position alike render it unnecessary. Cassino is rich and powerful, and will sustain, in this emergency, the fortunes of our house. As his wife, the time will come when you may demand of your sovereign, and receive at his hands, the estates which of right are yours. Viola, I await your answer. You will not disappoint me?"

"Oh, press me not to-night, dear father," gasped the Lady Viola. "Would that Don Ferdinand were back in Spain, and we were anywhere in safety and quiet. What is the dross of splendor to a child whose parent is an exile?"

Her head sunk on his bosom; and perceiving that she trembled much, he supported her in his arms.

"Have I alarmed you by my impetuosity?" he tenderly inquired.

"No, no," replied Viola, quickly.

"Then promise me to-night, now, that you will no longer oppose my wishes."

"I can not, dear father," sighed Viola.

"What!" exclaimed Don Manuel, thrusting his daughter from him, and holding her at arm's length, while his face grew purple with excitement. "Do you refuse still to obey me?"

"O God! O blessed Mary Mother! what will become of me?" said the Lady Viola, in agony. "Why will you urge me to destroy myself, both for this world and the next? You love me, father; then why ask me to cover my hopes and my

heart with mildew, and embrace a fate more revolting than death! You wish to see me happy, why then consign me to a life of unmixed misery and degradation?"

"You speak with pathos, Viola," said Don Manuel, sarcastically, "and as though there might be something of inspiration in your heart, as well as on your lips. Can it be that our good American friend, Captain Warwick, has taught you a lesson beyond the power of your own reason, or your father's authority, to gainsay?"

"However much I may esteem Captain Warwick," returned Viola, firmly, for her trying position had forced her to rally and rely on herself, "it has little to do with the estimation in which I hold Don Ferdinand de Cassino. My answer to him from the first has been, *nay*."

"And will my daughter be so good as to explain to her father the reasons for this pertinacious *nay* to the noble Castilian's suit?"

"I love him not."

"Well, well, child; I had no particular affection for your mother when we married; indeed, I had scarcely seen her thrice; and yet we lived, oh, how pleasantly together! and how deep and abiding was the love I learned to bear her!"

"But had my sainted mother been cold and false; had she been mean and treacherous, and blackened with infamy and crimes, could you have loved her?"

"Most assuredly not," replied Don Manuel.

"Then think no longer that it may be possible for me to love Don Ferdinand."

"Viola, what mean you?" said her father, quickly.

"I mean," returned the Lady Viola, "that were I his wife, I should not feel that I had any guaranty in his integrity or honor for the safety of my person or my life."

"Oh, Viola! Viola!" exclaimed Don Manuel, with an expression of horror on his countenance. "What mad delusion

has possessed your brain? Can not your own perverse course be sustained without blackening the fair fame of another?"

"It is hard," replied Viola, "for a child to know that she has become an object of doubt and suspicion to her parent, whose smiles and confidence have hitherto been the sunshine and joy of her life; but, father, such must your daughter remain to you, until God will that she succeed in opening your eyes to the true character of him you would call your son."

Don Manuel sunk into thoughtfulness and silence, and his daughter led him gently along into the log house which had that day been erected, and was now devoted to their joint accommodation. A cheerful fire was burning on a loose stone hearth, to dispel the dampness of the green wooden walls; and before it the two seated themselves on some matted stools. As her father made no reply, the Lady Viola, with a strong and resolute effort, which surprised herself, continued:

"To say nothing of the dissolute habits of Don Ferdinand's life, to leave all else and come at once to an act illustrative of the man, of such a pointed nature as to satisfy all to whom it may become known, I have only to refer you to an occurrence in New York. The attempt of an assassin on the life of Captain Warwick, on the night of the ball at Governor Clinton's, you can not have forgotten, as it was a matter of free remark at our house?"

"I remember the circumstance well," replied Don Manuel. "Warwick mastered the villain, and handed him over to the police. I never heard what became of him."

"Supposing him some vagabond, impelled perhaps by his necessities to commit a robbery, the generous American neglected to appear against him, and he was discharged."

"But what can all this have to do with Don Ferdinand?" said Don Manuel, impatiently.

"Enough! enough!" replied the Lady Viola. "Father, the bravo was his servant Ambrose."

"O God! you can not know this, Viola?"

"I do! I do! father. On the day following the vile attempt, as I sat reading in the garden in an usual spot—a little nook, among some vines which I had compelled for the hour to furnish me with a shade—Don Ferdinand came to the same place, to receive, it seems, the report of his man. The two were but a few paces from me, and I must needs hear all they said."

Viola paused.

"What did you hear?" almost shrieked Don Manuel.

"The servant told of his failure, and the master cursed him for a coward, and swore the deed should be accomplished, though he performed it himself."

"What deed, Viola? Merciful Heaven! You have connected some two strange events together in your mind, which can have no proper relation to each other."

Viola perceived that the countenance of her father had become white as marble.

"You are ill?" said she, in alarm.

"No, I am in torture. Give me the evidence!" said he, imperatively.

"I should be quite willing to have your supposition correct, father," continued the Lady Viola; "but there can be no room for doubt. I had my first intelligence of the attempt to assassinate Captain Warwick from the conversation to which I refer. Don Ferdinand required a minute report of his proceedings from his agent. Ambrose claimed to have followed his instructions implicitly. In the narrative he gave he related how he had followed Warwick from the Governor's castle to the beach overlooking the Bay; that for some time the American officer walked back and forth beneath the clear moon in such an open space that he could not approach him unseen; that finally he reclined against a tree and seemed lost in his own reflections; when, grasping his dagger, the fit

menial of such a lord, the valiant Ambrose of that most valiant and honorable Castilian, Cassino, stole up behind his intended victim, and sprung upon him. Being so heavily laden, however, with his master's virtues, in addition to his own, the man fell short of his aim, and became a spoil himself."

Don Manuel writhed and quivered in agony. The Lady Viola had spoken with a point and spirit which he had never witnessed before; and he was dumb.

"If you desire further proof," continued she, after a few moments' silence, "you may have it, I think, from Michael Johnson. Distressed as I was at what I had thus accidentally learned, and fearful lest a member of our own household should find means to carry out his purpose, and actually murder the benefactor of us all, I determined to confide the matter to Michael, and take his advice. I found him, however, by some means which he did not explain, already aware of Ferdinand's machinations. He assured me that Captain Warwick was on his guard, and that Cassino would be closely watched."

"Enough! enough! daughter," said Don Manuel. "I require nothing more. My mind is not frenzied, my heart is not frozen, however I may seem. My poor brain! my poor child! How much you have suffered from my blindness! But why has all this been kept away from me? Was not your father, Viola, above all others, entitled to your confidence?"

"I know not, dear father," replied Viola, "that I shall be able to explain, to your satisfaction, the reasons which induced me to say nothing to you on this subject; and quite likely I have misjudged and have done very wrong; but you have always made light to me of the vices of Don Ferdinand; and besides, I feared that a rupture between you two, just at present, might be disastrous. I knew not, but I feared, that we might be too much in his power to brave him."

Don Manuel made no reply. He had become calm again, and sat occupied with his own thoughts; while an air of quiet firmness and resolution stole gradually over his features, more hopeful to his daughter, and more pregnant with meaning than words. The conversation, for that night, was not renewed.

Chapter Twenty-one.

DON MANUEL TORRILLO.

"Frail as the moth's fair wing is common fame,
Brief as the sunlight of an April morn."

DON MANUEL TORRILLO was a native of Cordova, a city of Andalusia, and inherited the wealth and importance of an ancient and illustrious house. He had been a soldier in his youth, but his inclinations leading him to seek for political, rather than military eminence, he abandoned the profession of arms, and gave himself up to the business and intrigues of the court. Though, like most of his countrymen, he was possessed of quick feelings and a susceptible heart, still, owing to the circumstances which surrounded him, his engrossment with public affairs, and, more than all, the social habits of the circle in which he moved, he was somewhat advanced in life before he seriously thought of marriage; and when he finally did marry, it was at the solicitation and for the gratification of others, his family and friends. His wife was of their choosing, and the whole affair was one with which his affections had little or no concern.

The match was a very suitable one on the score of rank and fortune; and luckily for Don Manuel, his partner was possessed of so much good sense and prudence, that during her life he never once had occasion to regret their union, nor ever suspected that she was not as happy as himself. But

far different was it with her. The affections of the Lady Torrillo had been sacrificed by her parents at the shrine of convenience; but in the position they secured for her she was the envy of the world; and at her early death no one took the trouble to reflect that from the period of her marriage her cheek had gradually grown pale and paler, and her eye less brilliant, until she had withered away, like a flower transplanted from a garden to a desert. And no one among the rich display of her funeral ceremonies imagined that the Lady Torrillo ever had cause of sorrow, except her parents, who moved silently but stricken in the train of mourners, conscious that they themselves had crushed the jewel of their hearts; and the weeping Viola, then a child, who had clung to her mother like a tendril to its support, and long since had discovered, though she comprehended it not, in the hopeless melancholy of her parent, the worm which prayed on her life.

Don Manuel, though he had so little to do with love before marriage, had subsequently become much attached to his amiable wife, and mourned her loss with a deep and abiding sincerity. The splendor of the court, the strife for political mastery, which heretofore had yielded him pleasure, now became a burden and a toil to him. He gradually withdrew from them, and devoted much of his attention to the society and education of his child. She, meanwhile, grew up the blithest of Andalusian maids, as happy as the birds that caroled with her in her native orange groves, and the fairest thing reflected by the silver Guadalquiver. But ere her education was completed, Don Manuel received from his Sovereign a high civil appointment in Spanish America, which, under some peculiar circumstances, he did not deem himself at liberty to decline. He therefore with pain and anxiety at the prospect of a long separation, consigned his daughter to the guardianship of a sister in Madrid, and himself set sail for the New World.

In Mexico, he found the novelty of his situation and the cares of his office an agreeable palliative to his loneliness; still he hailed with joy the closing of the two years, when his daughter was to join him; and received her to his arms the blushing woman, radiant as a star; a matured and improved copy of her he had lost, and the only object for which he still cared to live and struggle with the world.

The arrival of the Lady Viola in Mexico was soon followed by that of Don Ferdinand de Cassino, who was some eight years her senior, and to whom in early childhood she had been betrothed, in spite of the feebly urged, but strongly felt, objections of her mother, and who, spurred into a sort of passion by the homage yielded to his affianced during her Madrid life, now came, full of impatience, for the consummation of his wishes by the performance of those rites which were to place him in possession of an object of such general envy and adulation. But from some cause Viola seemed little inclined to marriage at all; and the only perversity of disposition she had ever shown since she could lay any claim to the dignity of womanhood was in her quiet but resolute rejection of the suit of Don Ferdinand. To Viola had been confided by her grandparents the story of her mother; and though she failed to understand how any one could refrain from loving her kind and noble father, the lesson was not lost on her. She preserved it in her heart, and conned it when she was alone; and what about it she could not comprehend, she trustingly referred to the category of problems which were to receive their solution in the future, when she should become better versed in the mysterious alchemy of love.

The union of his daughter with the son of an old friend and companion at arms had long been a favorite project with Don Manuel; and although the gradual lopping off of his own hopes had centered his affections in his daughter so far as to

make him averse to forcing her inclinations, still he by no means considered the forbearance which he felt disposed to exercise as at all important to the ultimate happiness of his child. He could conceive no reasonable objections to the forming of an alliance and the fulfillment of an engagement every way so proper; and not dreaming that Viola's disinclination proceeded from any thing more serious than maiden coyness or disrelish of restraint, he encouraged Don Ferdinand to persevere in his attentions, and himself indulged no other idea than that of a happy result.

On the part of the Lady Viola these attentions were received with such cold politeness, and at times with such manifest disgust, as could not have failed to convince any one of the hopelessness of his suit, other than him who knows little of woman's heart, and is ignorant that her affections are not the toys, but the business of her life. Don Ferdinand from the first, considering Viola as his future wife, had neglected those little gallantries and kindly offices which imperceptibly win the heart, and seemed careless of her regard, until his jealousy was aroused by beholding her an object of interest to others. Then indeed there was a change, but it came too late. Viola saw through the flimsy vail with which he attempted to conceal his motives. She saw that he was heartless; and he himself, in his carelessness of her good opinion, had not taken the trouble to conceal from her that he was also licentious. To her, therefore, his sudden protestations of esteem, the honeyed words with which he mouthed love's language, and complained of lover's pangs; and his sighs and tears, for such indeed he had, were worthless, and fell without a meaning at her feet. But he, nothing daunted by the mild displays of her dislike, and pushed on by the pride of a conceited mind to carry a point on which he deemed his manhood staked; and also at length, perhaps, by a really awakened affection for one so lovely, did not hesitate to follow

her to America; and suffered few doubts to interfere with his anticipations of a final triumph.

Don Manuel was by no means a careless spectator of the world. He had deeply studied human nature, but solely for the furtherance of the great objects of his life. He knew how to inflame, and also how to soothe and bend the minds of men to his purposes, or to the wishes of those in power; but the very intentness of his application in this direction had unfitted him to judge of the means necessary to secure the happiness of individuals. He looked at mankind in the mass, rather than as an aggregation of separate persons, with different tastes and dispositions, and requiring very dissimilar things in order to satisfy their wants, and secure to them that enjoyment of life which is the right of every human being. He saw, therefore, nothing but a fair sky in the prospect of his daughter's union with Don Ferdinand, whose wealth and rank were equal to his ambition in her behalf, and secured to the chevalier at the outset a favorable position on the political arena, where he had already exhibited a capacity which promised an easy and brilliant success. His defects Don Manuel regarded with a lenient eye. His pride and arrogance he considered as almost necessarily a part of his station, and his loose morals the fault of the age, all of which would be worn away, or at least materially softened, as he should give his attention to matters of more moment, and become interested and occupied with public affairs. He saw not the force of Viola's objections in the clear light with which they were impressed on her mind by the story of her mother, and the disgust and mysterious repulsion of her own feelings; and he perceived no good reason why his daughter should remain single, or forego the advantages of her birth, because the nobility were licentious.

But however it might be in the end, week after week passed away, and the suit of Don Ferdinand seemed no nearer

a successful termination; when one of those sudden domestic convulsions, which for centuries have been the habit of Spain, occurred, and Don Manuel was numbered among the proscribed. He was privately notified of his danger, in season to avoid personal harm; and knowing the slight avail of innocence, or private worth, or public services, in the political wars of his country, he hesitated not to secure his safety by a precipitate flight. He exerted all his powers of persuasion on his unhappy daughter to prevent her from needlessly involving herself in his ruin, and, indeed, as a last resort, laid his paternal commands on her to suffer the nuptial ceremony to be performed, and return to her native land under the protection of a husband, and be happy; but he lost his sternness of purpose when he felt the warm tear of Viola on his cheek, as she hung upon his neck and declared, that nothing on earth, now that her father was an exile, should separate her from him. Don Manuel gave way, and the cold, calculating Ferdinand, touched for the moment with this display of filial affection, gallantly affirmed that he would follow her to the end of the world, to prove his devotion to the charms of her person and the sentiments of her heart.

Viola, when she understood his determination to accompany them in their flight, begged of him to relinquish the idea, if the supposition that she would change in her sentiments toward him was in any manner connected with the design; and even Don Manuel seconded her efforts; but the chevalier had caught a portion of Viola's ardor, and feeling for the time emotions to which he was in general a stranger, resolutely persisted.

It was no time for indecision or delay, and within a few hours after the first intimation of danger, the three, with a competent body of domestics, were on shipboard, bound for the British Colonies of North America.

Don Ferdinand now became less obtrusive in his attentions.

He even privately absolved the Lady Viola from the engagement of their parents, which had held them bound to each other from their infancy, and professed to leave her free to accept or reject his suit at pleasure. Meanwhile he exerted himself to dissipate the gloom which hung heavily over her father, and strove in a variety of ways, by words of sympathy, by reading and conversation, to enliven and cheer him. Don Manuel considered himself greatly obliged by the voluntary sacrifices and attentions of the chevalier; and Viola, as she beheld cheerfulness restored to her father, felt grateful and kindlier toward him, and long before their tedious voyage was ended, by the disastrous wreck of the galleon, she had thrown off much of the reserve and coldness of her former deportment, and had accustomed herself to receive and treat him with the courtesy and familiarity due to a friend.

During their stay in New York the conduct of Don Ferdinand varied as circumstances, or rather the horizon of his expectations, seemed to change. He early became jealous of Charles Warwick and suspicious of Viola; but the obligations under which he lay to the young American operated as a powerful restraint on his actions. He exhibited his feelings in his petulance; and though he was wise enough not to ruin his cause by any open act of positive ingratitude, he did not hesitate to attempt the removal of his rival from his path by the secret knife of the assassin; from which, as would seem, Warwick was saved by a mere accident. When at length the Spaniards were about to leave that city, the discouraged and exasperated suitor again appealed to parental authority to sustain him, and Don Manuel himself thought that it was indeed time that Ferdinand should receive his reward; yet, after a severe struggle, Viola again prevailed, again obtained delay, if not exemption. Under these circumstances there was one vivid consolation remaining to Don Ferdinand: Viola was at last to be separated from the man who, his heart told him, in the

space of a few weeks, without the prestige of wealth or rank, had awakened faculties of her soul which he, by many months of obsequious attentions and sacrifices, had been unable to reach; and he had already arrived at that elevated point in the history of his affection, that he preferred to see the object of it miserable, if he could not prevail on her to make him happy.

Chapter Twenty-two.

WARWICK AGAIN. HE TAKES A ROMANTIC RESOLUTION, AND PERFORMS A TRYING ACT OF BROTHERLY LOVE.

"O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle."

WE left Charles Warwick, it will be recollected, on the banks of the Hudson, at the period of his separation from the Spanish party, and immediately after his very unsatisfactory interview with Don Manuel Torrillo. Yielding, for the time, to the dark clouds which overshadowed him, and the evil influences which surrounded him, he deemed all lost; and careless alike of the present and the future, urged his headlong way into the depths of the forest, whithersoever his aimless steps chanced to carry him. At length, exhausted in mind and body, he threw himself on the ground, and gave himself wholly to his feelings. He did not weep, for he was not one of the weeping sort; indeed, he hardly thought any longer—he had exhausted thought; but he *felt;* and hopeless misery and despair were in his heart and brain, and stamped upon his features. Motionless as the trees that grew around him he remained for hours, but at last his eyes gradually assumed new fire. He arose and shook his limbs, which once more seemed full of vigor, looked at the sun, which was already waning in the west, and again started forward, but now with nerve and object in every motion.

The operations of mind which led to this change in Warwick were by no means unnatural. Of an ardent, hopeful

temperament, despair could not long hold him down, and while he lay inactive on the leaves, if he could no longer reason, he could dream. Forms of what might lie hidden in the future—each form a picture—like the elaborate scenes of a painter, passed in succession before his mental eye, and among them ultimately he perceived the shape he sought. From this point reason resumed its sway; and though no vista, glowing with sunshine, in which imagination could revel with delight, presented itself before him, and invited him to enter, still his consciousness had shown him a way, reflection had confirmed it, and he determined not to yield his golden hopes of life without a further desperate and final struggle.

He resolved, therefore, not to lose sight of his Spanish friends, but to follow them in their inexplicable journey. Nor, in coming to this conclusion, were his motives altogether selfish. He believed that they were ignorantly running into danger, that the course they were pursuing was, as it were, inviting their own destruction; and, irrespective of his personal aspirations, even though it were certain that his own faint hopes were to be utterly blasted, he could not find it in his heart to relinquish the Lady Viola and her father to their impending fate, without an effort to save them.

Accordingly, with much diligence, the young soldier threaded the mazes of the wood, until he struck upon their trail; and pressing onward, now with scarcely a perception of fatigue, ere nightfall he was rewarded with a sight of the party itself, already come to a halt, and preparing a lodgment for the night. Satisfied with his success, and familiar with forest life, he fell back a short distance, stilled the cravings of his appetite with the wild berries and roots which he was able to gather from the earth and the brambles, and found comfortable quarters for the night in the low, thick branches of a tree, where he slept safely and undisturbed until morning.

Early on the following day, by taking a small circuit, he placed himself in advance of the Spaniards; and as they proceeded very much at their leisure, he had no difficulty, at any time, in passing entirely around them, and thus ascertaining that their pathway was unobstructed. It was at the close of this day, as the Spaniards had halted for the night, that his restless feelings, and the desire to look into the internal arrangements of their camp, in which desire the wish to behold the Lady Viola again, formed doubtless a prominent element, induced him to approach so closely that he was discovered by Ruby O'Brady. He did not wait, in his retreat, for her to satisfy herself of his identity; and he resolved that the occurrence should operate as a salutary caution for the future.

The course which the party were pursuing, pushing as they were toward the very center of the confederacy of the Six Nations, was to him more and more a subject of surprise and apprehension. In vain he hoped each morning, as they struck their tents, that they might diverge to the right, a change necessary in order to conduct them to the point, as they had given out, of their destination, and which would keep them nearer the white settlements, and consequently more within the reach of succor in case of need. But day after day they kept on, as it seemed to him, without a thought of the future, and careless alike of their own safety or destruction.

As they approached the valleys of the larger streams, which, as Warwick well knew, contained several Indian villages, and were favorite hunting-grounds with the tribes whose castles or centers were farther north, he proceeded in advance, and throwing himself fearlessly among the savages, became a sort of self-constituted envoy in behalf of his Spanish friends. Able as he was to make himself understood by them in their own tongue, and wearing the guise of peace, and boldly con-

fiding his own safety to their hands, their suspicious natures were quieted, and they received him as a friend. Especially was he fortunate in falling in with Rollingbow, a chief of the Onondagas, whom he had seen the season before at Albany, and who now cordially invited him to his lodge.

He found Rollingbow at the head of a large hunting party of his tribe, whose field of operation was at present around the genial waters of the Delaware and Susquehanna. Their camp or village occupied a pleasant valley, shut in by high hills, and through which coursed a pure and gentle stream. It was but a temporary affair, and still had been laid out with considerable attention to comfort and regularity. Most of the lodges were mere wigwams, constructed of poles and bark, but some there were of a more pretending and substantial character, built of logs and clay, after the pattern of the cabins of the white settlements.

Attached rather to the English than the French interest, and having known Warwick as an English officer and an agent of the British Colonies, the Onondaga deemed this a proper occasion on which to manifest his sentiments, and give strength to his own views among his people. He felt every disposition, therefore, to treat his guest with marked consideration. To this, however, there was one drawback. The near approach of a large body of armed men, who were neither French nor English, and whose object was vailed in profound secrecy, had filled the whole region with alarm. In these strangers Captain Warwick acknowledged a deep interest. Rollingbow, however, did not hesitate, at the request of the American, to summon at once the chief men of the vicinity, to hear what he had to say.

Warwick took it upon him to assure the council of grave chiefs and warriors who had been deemed worthy to assemble on the occasion, of the peaceable disposition of the Spanish party. He informed them how these foreigners had been

shipwrecked, and cast upon the hospitality of the city of New York: that they had there been treated with great kindness and attention: that finding no vessel in readiness to take them back to their own country, they were now on their way to the French Colonies of the north, in the hope there to meet with a better success: that relying on the well-known magnanimity of the Six Nations, they had chosen a route through the territories of the Confederacy: that for all supplies they might need, they were willing to pay: that they came as friends, and desired to depart as friends: and that if unobstructed in their journey, a few days only would witness their final departure beyond the Great Lakes.

This explanation seemed satisfactory to the council. They adjourned in good spirits, with warm expressions of regard for their American friend, each one shaking him several times over by the hand; and Rollingbow determined to get up a feast, on the morrow, in his honor. The important personages present were accordingly at once invited, and separated from each other and retired to their several homes, in great good humor.

With the succeeding day came the Warwick dinner. The place selected was the shade of an embowering willow; the table, the ground; and the cloth, the fragrant and unpolluted grass. Here were served up in native earthen and wooden bowls, with rude ceremony, and seasoned with hospitable good-will, the choicest dishes known to their barbarian cookery. The principal courses consisted of boiled venison, and cakes made of the maize or Indian corn; and the delicious succotash, composed of bear's meat, boiled with green corn and beans. The whortleberry, gathered fresh from the hills, with the crimson fruit of the wintergreen, formed the dessert; and it is certain that less savory viands have often been served at festivals of much greater pretension. All joined in doing honor to their guest. They danced before him, and sung

songs for his amusement. These were, in general, extempore stories of the war and the hunt, in which each one was the hero of his own narration, and gave himself up without restraint to garrulity and self-glorification. True, with all this was still preserved a sort of gravity proper to the Indian character, but this only gave the greater zest to the tale, the feathered jest, and the sonorous laugh.

But while these festivities were still at their height, the sounds of revelry suddenly ceased. The singers became dumb, and the dancers stood still. A runner came in with the intelligence that the friendly relations between them and the Spaniards were already broken; the blood of a native had been spilled, and the offending white was a prisoner.

From the vivid description of the scout, Warwick was at no loss to conclude that the captive was his particular friend, Don Ferdinand de Cassino; and it can not be denied that the first wave of the sensation which followed, was mingled with a bitter joy. He did not, however, suffer the unworthy feeling to find even a temporary lodgment in his breast. He cast it from him as beneath him and beneath humanity. His second thought was magnanimous and worthy of himself; and not a moment did he hesitate to act upon it. He inquired particularly into the circumstances of the affair, and perceived at once, and represented to the savages, that the unfortunate rencounter had probably originated in misapprehension, and not in design. In the suddenness of the transaction, and the excitement of the moment, during the brief interval while the Spaniard was in chase of the deer, it doubtless did not occur to him that the animal might be one which the Indian hunters were pursuing; and instead of regarding himself as an intruder, he very naturally looked on the native as such, who had stepped between him and his game, just at the instant he was coming up with it. Warwick admitted that the young Spaniard was of a hasty temper, but added that the old chief who

headed the party regarded him as a son, and would deeply grieve should any ill befall him.

But it is needless to enumerate all the arguments and efforts of the generous American in behalf of his ungenerous rival, inasmuch as the result is already before the reader. Suffice it that with much difficulty he succeeded in allaying the irritated feelings of the savages so far that they consented to restore their captive to liberty unharmed. Accordingly, after a confinement of a single night, Don Ferdinand, much to his own surprise and joy, was informed that he was free, and furnished with a guide to conduct him back to his friends. He departed without suspecting the agency which Warwick had had in his liberation, and indeed without a thought that his dreaded rival could be anywhere in that portion of the world.

Chapter Twenty-three.

A REVERSE. THE WATCH-FIRE AND THE WAR-DANCE. THE INDIAN WIDOW.

"Aye, my own boy! thy sire
Is with the sleepers of the valley cast."

ALTHOUGH the savages had consented to forego their revenge, and had yielded up their prisoner at his solicitation, Warwick was aware, from several circumstances that came within the range of his notice, that their irritation was not wholly allayed. They seemed moody and less social than usual, and he could not but observe that throughout the two succeeding days there was a gradual accession to their numbers. While turning these facts in his mind, with some anxiety, his ears were saluted with sounds of grief in the distance, which were successively caught up and echoed by others nearer; and soon the village was filled with the cries and lamentations of its whole female and juvenile population. Before he could ascertain the cause of this outbreak of sorrow, he found himself surrounded by a motley assemblage of women and children, who covered him with reproaches, and amid incessant shrieks and wails, seemed with difficulty to withhold themselves from doing violence to his person. While with some effort and apprehension he was keeping them at bay, endeavoring at the same time to calm the tumult, that he might learn the meaning of what he saw, several warriors came up, and with little ceremony dispersed the unsoldier-like rabble. Having done this, two of their number seized him firmly behind, while others presented their weapons in such a

manner as effectually to quell resistance, and led him away to the same tenement which had not long before been the prison of Don Ferdinand de Cassino.

Sudden as was this reverse, Warwick was discreet enough not to sacrifice himself by a fruitless resistance. His seizure was effected without unnecessary harshness, a rare virtue among exasperated savages, and all the more a circumstance of good omen. From his captors he could get no explanation. They were evidently acting under orders, and performed the business of his incarceration as mutely and dispassionately as though they had been pieces of locomotive mechanism. As they were about to depart and leave him to the solitude of his cell, he requested them at least to do him the favor to bear a message from him to their chief. He desired that Rollingbow would inform him at once of what he was accused, that he might know what cause could induce an Onondaga chief to violate the hospitality he had once proffered to a stranger.

Something like an hour had passed away, and, meanwhile, the tumult without had very considerably subsided, giving place to moans and the softer sounds of grief, when Rollingbow came. The chief was grave and stern, and the expression of his countenance comported well with the native dignity of his deportment, as he entered the lodge and addressed his prisoner.

"Helmo, the guide of the Spaniard, is dead," said he, "slaughtered like a beast on the hills. This may be no news to Captain Warwick, but it was news indeed to us! The body has just been brought in, stained and disfigured with its own blood. The sounds of sorrow you have heard, and the violence you have witnessed, indicate but in part the grief and indignation of my people."

"And can you suppose for a moment, Rollingbow," said Warwick, in astonishment and alarm, "that I have had any thing to do with this murder?"

"How should I know, Captain Warwick?" returned the Indian. "You asked the life of your friend, and we gave it, and sent Helmo to conduct him through the wood to his companions. Helmo is slain. I had thought the American brave a friend to Rollingbow and his people. I gave you to eat of my bread, to drink of my water, to lie down by my fire. I treated you like a brother."

Warwick approached the offended savage, and laid his hand on his arm. "I am innocent," said he, solemnly, "and your suspicions wrong me. I declare it in the presence of the white man's God, and the Great Spirit of the Indians. I am innocent!"

The act, and the heartiness with which these words were uttered, evidently made a favorable impression on the chief. He then informed Warwick that the family of the guide having become anxious on account of his absence, he had sent out men who had followed the trail to the near vicinity of the Spanish camp, where they had found his lifeless body. The reader will have no difficulty in concluding that this was the same body which had been discovered by Johnson; and the situation in which he left it, and the subsequent conduct of the Indians on finding it, will at once recur to his recollection.

But Warwick could not readily bring himself to the belief that the Indian had come to his end by the hand of Don Ferdinand, a conclusion at which Rollingbow and his people had at once arrived. He knew the Spaniard to be capable of almost any act of baseness, but that he would raise his arm against the life of another, who, at the very moment, was performing toward him an important act of kindness, exceeded all his conceptions of depravity. The American forgot to what desperate revenges wounded pride sometimes decoys its victims. Nevertheless he found it extremely difficult to explain the transaction, even to himself, in any way consistent with Don Ferdinand's innocence; and this being the case, how could

he hope to remove the reasonable and settled conviction of the savages? He saw at a glance the great difficulties of his own situation, and the perils threatening Don Manuel and his party, and felt, in its full force, the necessity on his part of prompt and prudent action.

"Things look very dark, it is true, Rollingbow," said he; "but is it not possible that Helmo fell in some broil, after parting with the Spaniard?"

"His wound is deep," returned the chief; "made with the long knife of the white man."

"But if Don Ferdinand had killed him, would he have covered his body, and put up a signal over the spot, so that his friends might find him?"

"A Mohawk did that," replied Rollingbow. "A Mohawk, who could not stay to tell us, found Helmo naked in the forest, and covered him away from the wolves."

"Rollingbow! Rollingbow!" said Warwick, in painful momentary excitement, "I can not explain this terrible catastrophe. It is a horrible mystery. But believe me, no Christian man could commit such a dastardly act."

"And would an Indian do it?" said Rollingbow, proudly, and stretching his straight form to its utmost altitude.

"No, no," replied Warwick, quickly. "There are bad Indians, but there is no Indian vile enough to break his faith and kill his friend. For years I lived with your people, and suffered much at the hands of some of them; but never did I witness among them a deed of so black a dye as that of which you seem disposed to accuse this Spaniard, and never, I must add, have I witnessed before to-day a breach of hospitality in a chief."

The Indian smiled faintly as he replied:

"These logs will save the American from the tomahawks of my braves, and the taunts and blows of my women and young men. When the moon pales in the morning, good man

or bad man, he can go. The door of his prison shall be set open. He is strong. Let him run with the fleetness of the deer till he finds himself safe in the great town with his people. Rollingbow breaks not his faith with the stranger."

Warwick seized the noble savage by the hand, and pressed it to his heart.

"Though there are strong reasons," said he, "why I would not at present have any intercourse with these Spaniards, I will go to them and unravel this mystery. If they have wronged you, they must make you reparation."

The Indian laughed again, but this time it was in derision. He elevated his tall and commanding person, and swung his arm above his head with an emphatic gesture, as he replied :

"Shall we beg of the pale faces a string of beads or a blanket, for the life of an Onondaga? The spirits of our fathers, the ghost of the dead Helmo, would come among us and point their fingers at us in scorn. The Spaniards shall die!"

Thus saying, Rollingbow, like a proper monarch of the wilds, strode out of the lodge.

The tenement in which Warwick was confined was of loose construction, but of considerable strength. There were apertures here and there between the logs, which, in the absence of windows, served to let in a modicum of light, and through which a partial survey of what was occurring without might be obtained. A rude door of split wood closed the entrance, and before it was stationed a solitary savage as a guard. In no very pleasurable frame of mind, though the prospect of liberty at no very distant period was before him, our hero placed himself at the wall, to observe, as best he might, the temper and movements of the Indians.

Night had but just conquered, and closed her blue vaulted windows against the day, when he perceived from his watch a bright flame shoot up from an open plain in the midst of the village, which rapidly increased in magnitude, until it became

an immense bonfire, and the hills around and the heavens were broadly illuminated by its glare. About this pyramid of fire he could plainly see the gathering of a body of warriors, painted in the most hideous manner, and decked in their most showy trappings; and soon he became horrified as the well-known war-whoop broke on his ear, and he saw them engage in the frightful pageant of the war-dance. Only a portion of the actors were visible to him at once. They passed before him in segments, as in their mazy evolutions they circled around the fire; and their forms, in relief against the glowing pyre, their flashing weapons, and all the minutiæ of their bedeckments and movements, were visible, and defined with a terrible distinctness to his eye. They leaped, they whirled, they mixed together pell-mell, cutting and slashing with their tomahawks and knives; they grappled—the infuriated warrior would appear to single out his foe, would leap upon him, and seem to sheathe his weapon in his heart, and tear his scalp from his head—while the air was rent with their yells; the fearful cry to the onset mingling and dying away in the triumphal shouts of an imaginary victory.

The picture was complete; not only a graphic representation of an Indian battle, but, as Warwick well knew, was intended to shadow forth scenes in which the actors themselves expected soon to be engaged. The danger to Don Manuel and his party, he perceived, was not only imminent, but immediate; and with a restless anxiety he turned again to examine the strength and fastenings of his prison door. The athletic savage who had at first been placed over him as a guard, he discovered, was no longer there. His place was filled by an aged Indian, who was sitting some paces away, engrossed in the contemplation of the exciting pageant without. Warwick placed his shoulder cautiously against the door, but it resisted his efforts; and then, for the twentieth time perhaps, he took the round of his cell, in the hope to discover some

point in the walls weak enough to justify a vigorous assault. On the side opposite the door, his attention was arrested by a low, plaintive sound; and looking out he perceived an Indian woman, whom he at once recognized as the wife of the murdered brave, but few paces from him seated on a stone. She had a babe in her arms; and partly, as it seemed, as a lullaby to her child, and partly to give vent to her feelings, she sung. Warwick spoke to her, but though she must have heard him, she made him no reply. She looked alternately on her babe and upon the sky, in apparent abstraction from every thing that was passing around her; while with a voice of soft melody she murmured her passing thoughts in a most melancholy strain.

"He is dead," said she; "Helmo is dead—the warrior of fifty battles is no more.

"He died not as the brave should die, in the midst of victory and the groans of his slain;

"Or in defeat, when the ghosts of his enemies go before him to the land of shades.

"He died by the treacherous hand of the white man, who slew him like a dog, when he needed him no more.

"Helmo is gone: the light of my life, the sun of my morning and my noon.

"He is gone: and this bosom where his head rested from toil is like the spring that is dry.

"He will not come back; I shall see him never, till I meet him in the land of shades.

"The cabin of Helmo is cold; there is no smoke above it; the north wind whistles through its walls.

"No stranger may enter within; it hath no longer meat, even for his wife and son.

"The arm that reared it is broken; his blanket hangs on the wall: his hounds lie silent at the door!

"His arrows will bring down no more deer; his bear-skins are given to the moths.

"His son will never know him; he will call on his name, and ask me in vain for his father.

"Then I will point him to the white man, and teach him the revenge of a warrior.

"His young hand shall grasp the weapon of his sire; he shall drink deep of the water of their hearts.

"My curse on the white man! My curse on the pale face that slew my buck! My curse on his race!

"Helmo was a great man; he was a mighty brave; in the chase, in the battle, he was strong.

"In the surprise he was subtile as a fox: his eye was the eye of a snake.

"He was still as the air that makes no noise; he sprung on his foe like the panther.

"Then he was terrible as the whirlwind; his voice was the voice of the clouds;

"The blow of his hatchet, like the quick lightning; the touch of his knife, death.

"But in his lodge, Helmo was gentle as a fawn; his voice was a zephyr, and his eyes the eyes of the brown dove."

The Indian widow ceased singing, and Warwick addressed her again; but by no word or sign did she manifest that she heard him, or was even aware of his vicinity. Failing thus to arouse her attention, he commenced a low chant similar to her own. The burden of his strain was as follows:

"The white and the red man are of the same blood; they are the handiwork of the same Great Spirit.

"There are brave men and good among both; among both are some treacherous and base.

"Then curse not all whites; my sisters, pale daughters of the east,

"Would gladly comfort the dark widow in her grief,

"And mingle their tears with hers, till they fall like the dew-drops of morning.

"Oh, curse them not; curse not their brother; and mourn not too deeply;

"Trouble comes like the wind to all, the white as well as the red men.

"But his children the Great Spirit loves; in his hand he will hold and preserve them.

"There is grief with me too; I'm a bird in a net; my crime is that God made me white.

"My mother has tears like thine; go, tell her to weep for her son!"

As Warwick concluded, the Indian woman arose quickly, and laying her pappoose, bound up in its wicker-work covering, against the stone on which she had been sitting, she passed without noise to the door of his prison, and softly undid the fastenings. Stepping within, she laid her hand timidly on his shoulder, and said:

"The door is open. Go, white man! You could not have slain the father of my boy. Go, lest your mother or your wife or your sisters weep like the wife of Helmo. Go, that they may look on the sky and see it bright; that they may taste of the air and the water, and find them sweet. This they will do when he that they love is with them."

Penetrated with gratitude at the magnanimity of this poor savage, and feeling a presentiment that under a state of things very likely to occur he might possibly abuse it, for a moment he hesitated to accept his freedom at her hands. But

his indecision was of short duration. The dangers threatening Don Manuel, and the form of another, as pure and as full of confiding faith as the dark native before him, exposed to the peril of death, and other nameless horrors, rushed on his mind so vividly as to overpower every other consideration. He uttered his thanks to his deliverer in a few hasty words; and kissing her brown hand, as he bade her adieu, passed into the open air. The ancient savage, whose duty it was to guard against an occurrence of this nature, was but too happily engrossed with objects in another direction; the sights and sounds, the flashing arms and notes of preparation, of his people. For nothing else had he eyes or ears; and Warwick, perceiving his abstraction, aided his kind friend in closing the door and readjusting its fixtures before taking his departure.

Passing hastily to the rear of his late prison, he took a rapid survey of the Indian forces, and their state of preparation; then, keeping within the shadow of the building, he lost no time in pushing for the forest. The hurried glance he had taken was sufficient to show him that the number of the warriors assembled very much exceeded the entire force of the Onondagas; and that, having finished their preliminary rites, they were about getting under way. Well aware of the speed with which, ranged in single file, their war-parties thread the pathless woods, independent of the light of day, he felt the necessity of dispatch in his own movements, and within a very short period had accomplished such a distance that he ceased to hear the loudest reverberations of the war-whoop from the hills; and the whole of the startling occurrences of the last few hours would at once have become food for memory alone, had it not been that in the east were still perceptible a cloud of accumulating and deepening vapor, and a red glow upon the sky.

Chapter Twenty-four.

THE ATTACK.

"But go and rouse your warriors, for if right
These old bewildered eyes could guess, by signs
Of strip'd and starred banners on yon height
Of eastern cedars, o'er the creek of pines,
Some fort embattled by your country shines:
Deep roars the innavigable gulf below
Its squared arch and palisaded lines.
Go! seek the light its war-like beacons show,
While I in ambush wait for vengeance and the foe."

THE ground covered by the Spanish camp, as we have already taken occasion to observe, had been selected by an experienced eye. It was, in truth, an elevated bluff of considerable extent, bounded for two thirds of its circumference by the Delaware River and the branch which there united with it, dividing and forming for the two currents high, rocky, and nearly perpendicular banks. Along the edge of these shores extended the line of palisades, which, crossing the continuous land on the north, from stream to stream, was there strengthened by a mound and ditch. From this breastwork, which was indeed the only point of approach to the fortification, the ground very gradually descended, increasing at the same time in width as the course of the two rivers diverged from each other; and here, for some rods, the sparse trees and clumps of laurel, and whatever else might serve as a shelter to an enemy, had been cleared away.

It was now an hour or more past midnight, and the fortress, save the drowsy sentinels, was wrapped in profound repose. The moon rode high, and the white tents of the Spaniards

sparkled in its rays. The little block-house stood in their midst, and far above all towered some two or three dead pines, which, being large and near the center of the encampment, it had been deemed unnecessary to disturb. These were the only trees remaining on what could properly be called the bluff, and to the eye all else, except the river courses and the bald brow of some hill in the distance, presented the appearance of an interminable wood. A thick fog lay low on the bosom of the rivers, which, with its leaden shades flashing in the moonlight, looked like strata of variegated marble. There was a gentle breeze stirring; and as the fog rapidly increased in volume portions of it were borne upon the land, and mixing with the trees rolled through the forest, and involved the encampment in its hazy folds, till the moon was shut out, and every thing became mingled together in a dim and uncertain light.

At this period a single Indian advanced a few paces from the woods in front of the camp, and stretched his head forward in an attitude of attention. Satisfied, to appearance, with his observation, he withdrew again to the cover of the trees, and bearing to the left, a short distance brought him to the shore of the lesser river. Noiselessly he let himself down from point to point of the craggy bank, until he found a precarious footing nearly on a level with the water, and cautiously passing on he was soon abreast of the eastern line of the palisades. Here he paused for a moment; but discovering nothing to occasion alarm, with much toil he raised himself from one rocky projection to another, until he nearly reached the base of the fortification. Pausing again, his quick eye caught the outline of a man almost directly above him, and at once he sunk down against the rock, motionless as though he were a part of it. The lonesome sentinel, meanwhile, unconscious of danger, to relieve the tedium of his watch, and perhaps his restless thoughts, which might have been dragging him in mind to his

distant home, far away over the ocean, murmured rather than sung some snatches of an old Moorish song. Soon, however, he ceased, and yawning, cast a vacant eye above; and turning partly around rested himself heavily on his musket.

The obscurity of the fog was still partial, but increasing, and the savage remained stationary for some minutes. Shortly, however, he was in motion again, and passing on horizontally for a few paces, he drew himself up to a level with the palisades, when, elevating his tall, gaunt person, he took a hasty survey, so far as his sight could penetrate, of the works before him. It was but a moment that he trusted himself in this exposed position, but sinking to his knees, advanced still a few feet farther, where, gaining his legs once more, he extended his head boldly above the pickets. All was quiet. The sentinels on either side of him, whose forms were just visible, though awake to be sure, were dull and dreamy at their posts, and evidently unsuspicious of evil; and the wily savage, insinuating his flexible body between the points, slid like an eel slowly and silently over, and stood among the tents of his enemies.

Although now pretty well sheltered from the hazard of detection, the Indian relaxed nothing of his vigilance. Sinking on his belly, he glided like a serpent on the ground; now motionless, as some sentry, by a change of position or a tap of his musket, would indicate to his fellows the faithfulness of his watch; and again, on the move, but so sluggishly as to deceive any one who was not near enough to take in the compass of his shape. He stopped in the rear of a tent that stood nearly in the center of the area, conspicuous from its size, and which was in fact the one usually occupied by the principal personages of the Spanish party. Listening a moment, with the knife from his girdle he cut the cord which made fast the canvas to the earth, and cautiously inserted his head beneath the folds. Nothing gave evidence that any creature

possessing life was there, except the hard breathing which frequently accompanies deep sleep. Satisfied with his scrutiny he withdrew his head, and opening a small clay box, secured in a case of willow twigs, which he bore in his hand, he blew on the burning coal of touch-wood it contained, and inserting a little bundle of matches of the pitch-pine, readily produced a flame. He applied it to the canvas at several points, and with the same noiseless precaution with which he had advanced, retired to a less exposed situation in the rear of the block-house to await the result. It was a brief space before the flames overcame the slight moisture of the cloth, and gained a sufficient headway to attract the attention of the sentinels. But when, as soon occurred, they shot upward, and, magnified by the fog, presented the appearance of several columns of phosphoric light, each left his post and hastened to inquire into the nature of the phenomenon.

This was a moment awaited by the savage with intense anxiety—the very pivot on which turned the success or failure of his plot. He stretched his long neck from the rear of the cabin, where he lay like a snake in his coil, and beheld with exultation that the fire had already communicated to the adjoining tents, and doubted not, in the confusion which would ensue, that victory would be easy. But at that instant a voice, loud enough to awake every sleeper of the camp, broke on his ear: "Hoa! to arms! the Indians are upon you!" and the eye of the savage caught the outline of a man, as Charles Warwick, having scaled the trench and breastwork on the north, notwithstanding a volley of balls and arrows from the woods, alighted unharmed in the inclosure. At the same instant the war-whoop burst from the forest, and was answered by a sound as deep, the war-cry of Rollingbow of the Onondagas, in the very center of the Spanish camp.

In making his way to the fortress of the whites, Warwick had been subjected to irritating delays. He had found his

path already occupied by advanced parties of the Indians, and had been obliged to pick his way through them as best he might; and now, as he became aware that Rollingbow had anticipated him in the march, and had even effected an entrance into the encampment, his heart misgave him. Pushing forward, however, a brief survey was sufficient to inform him of the true state of affairs. Suddenly aroused from sleep, amid shouts, and flames, and mist, the Spaniards were confounded. Hastily collecting the first half dozen men he met, Warwick led them to the defense of the breastwork, but again found that the Onondaga was before him. The active chief, aided by those without, had already succeeded in effecting a breach, through which a score of savages were entering as the American came up. Uttering a cry for succor, the whites discharged their muskets, and clubbing them in their hands rushed on their assailants. The foe recoiled, but encouraged by the voice of Rollingbow and the small number of their opposers, immediately rallied again; when, Don Manuel coming up with a reinforcement, after a short and furious struggle, they were finally driven back, and with yells of disappointed rage sought the covert of the forest. Very shortly all subsided into silence again, and the presumption was, that the enemy, meeting with a warmer reception than they anticipated, had withdrawn. Hearty but hasty congratulations passed between Don Manuel and Captain Warwick, and while the former remained at the point of action to repair the breach in his defenses, the American took the round of, the camp.

The night was now intensely dark. Such portions of the burning tents as it had been found difficult to extinguish, were pulled down and thrown in a mass together; but the light which the smoldering fragments sent forth was wholly insufficient to dispel the gloom. The smoke rose heavily, or hardly rising at all, mingled with the fog, and formed a dense volume of vapor, which the eye in vain strove to penetrate.

Having seen that the sentinels were at their posts, Warwick approached the fire, and as he did so, observed an Indian snatch a brand from the mass; and springing forward, he perceived that it was Rollingbow. The chief no longer wore the complacent countenance which Warwick had been accustomed to see. He was naked to the waist, and disfigured with paint; and yet the glaring colors—the spots and stripes which covered the upper part of his person, and transformed him into a demon, were only in keeping with the malignant expression of his face. The fire was between them, and the American had already elevated his pistol, before he recognized the Onondaga in his altered form. Then, indeed, from a very natural feeling, he paused; and ere he could recover from his surprise sufficiently to speak, the savage, dropping his brand, disappeared.

But the star of the daring and successful Rollingbow was on the wane. As he retired from the compassionate weapon of his white adversary, for an instant his predominant caution forsook him, and making a sudden turn to baffle pursuit, just at the instant that the shouts of his warriors informed him that they had renewed their attack on the Spanish outworks, he unwarily, in the darkness, threw himself into the outstretched arms of Hugh O'Brady. The collision produced an utterance of the slight guttural "Waugh!" from the Indian, and the corresponding one of "Och!" from the Irishman, as they met with a force, had it not been well balanced, sufficient to have brought them both to the ground. O'Brady was a muscular man, and a brave one, still he experienced certain premonitory qualms as the withy limbs of the savage closed around him; and he felt within himself that the grapple was one unto death. Nevertheless he brought his brawny arms around his enemy, if not as quickly, with a right good-will, and with such force as almost to suspend the function of his breathing. Both dropped their muskets as useless incum-

brances, and for the moment neither knife nor pistol could be extricated, so that the struggle was solely one of limb to limb, where each depended on his God, and the pillar of his own strength. They raised upon each other, whirled and writhed with interlocked limbs, and the whole exerted power of their frames. The tall and supple Indian overtopped the Irishman by a head; but his body bent in every direction under the sturdy strength of O'Brady; still, with the agility of the wildcat of his own hills, he would recover, and the less elastic white would stagger under the sudden and unexpected force of his rebounds. At length the contest seemed about to terminate. The Indian was bent over nearly to the ground, and the Irishman uppermost; when, quickly dropping his knee to the earth, and sustaining for an instant the whole weight of his adversary, the savage shot upon his feet like an arrow, and with a sudden whirl placed himself upon the prostrate body of his opponent. It now indeed seemed all over with Hugh. For the moment he was stunned, and his foe had already succeeded in extricating his knife, and had raised it in his hand to strike, when, with a last effort, O'Brady seized him by the scalp-lock which hung from the top of his head, and winding his arms around his neck, forced it down upon his breast, where he held it with the strength and tightness of a vice. The struggles of the Indian were desperate, but ineffectual. He gave random blows with his weapon, which grew weaker and weaker, till, at last, his muscles relaxed, his limbs became pliant, and he lay motionless upon the body of his fortunate adversary.

When Hugh O'Brady considered that his terrible antagonist was actually dead, or if not dead, at least insensible, he cautiously loosed his hold, and dragged himself out from beneath the carcass, with the design of finishing his achievement with a single blow; when, at a bound, the wily chief was again on his feet, possessed himself of his musket, and disappeared in

the darkness. The Irishman gazed after him with a feeling akin to his terror of the supernatural: but the noise of the combat, the shouts of the assailants and assailed, were waxing louder and louder; he shook himself to ascertain if bone and muscle still would play at will, groped till he found his gun, and with a bluff oath and a whole heart advanced to the support of his fellows in arms.

The Lady Viola, on this eventful night, was awakened by the cry that gave notice to the sleepers of the camp that their enemies were upon them. She knew the voice, but had little time to reflect on the strangeness of its appearance there. Rising in haste, she threw aside the hangings which divided her apartment from that of her father, and entered his room. Don Manuel was already on his feet, with his arms in his hands. He drew his daughter to his breast and entreated her to be calm; when the shouts of the savages and the cry of fire, coming to his ear, he placed his servant Solyman at the door as a guard, and rushed out of the block-house. A dull fire blazed on some stones in one corner of the cabin; and the smoke, slowly struggling through the moist atmosphere, ascended in sluggish volumes, and escaped at an aperture left for its egress, save such folds as lost their direction, and rolled into the angle of the roof, filling it with fantastic and shadowy wreaths. Viola cast a look of silent anguish around as her father disappeared. She did not weep, but she trembled, and her face was deadly pale. Turning to Solyman, she bade him leave her, and go out and look after the safety of his lord. But the faithful menial knew his duty better. He replied with words of cheer: and the attention of the Lady Viola was immediately thereafter withdrawn to her women, who rushed into her presence with all the frantic behavior of ungovernable fear. She set herself to soothing them, and became calm.

"Ruby," said she to that tall blue-eyed maiden, who stood

apart from the rest, silently listening to the din and confusion without, "you set us an example of fortitude to-night, which we shall all do well to follow. Your father, too, is exposed to the dangers of the battle, and still you are composed."

"Heaven save my father and my good mistress!" whispered the girl in reply, with a slight Irish accent; and the pallor of her usually bright face sufficiently indicated the depth of those feelings, the outward manifestation of which she possessed the strength of mind to repress.

Signor Antonio and Doctor Oquetos now entered the block-house.

"Daughter," said the divine, addressing the Lady Viola, "fear not! Have no apprehension for the success of our arms. The saints will not give us over to become an inheritance to the heathen; the Christian's God is with us, and we shall conquer! Solyman, child, what canst thou distinguish without? by the ear, I mean; for that wondrous organ, the eye, is just now utterly useless."

"I hear, father," returned Solyman, "the yells of the savages. Now they grow fainter: and now I hear the shouts of victory from our defenders."

"Heaven be praised!" ejaculated the priest, holding up his hands.

"But my father!" said Viola. "Would that I were assured of his safety! Even a victory has its black shadows."

"True," said the kind-hearted divine. "But our lord is doubtless safe. God would not take him from us, in the wilderness of a foreign land, surrounded as we are by wolves. And now thank our Lady, daughter, for I hear him approaching."

The Lady Viola fervently raised her eyes to Heaven; but instead of the form of her father presenting itself at the door, an Indian, with uplifted tomahawk, sprung upon Solyman. But sudden as was the attack, the faithful attendant to whom

Don Manuel had confided the safety of his daughter, was not taken by surprise. His pistol was swifter than the hatchet of his foe; and the dusky assailant drew back with a cry of pain. But a moment after, Solyman himself staggered within, pierced with an arrow. Signor Antonio and Doctor Oquetos now rushed to the defense; and the platoon of savages who immediately assailed the entrance, found themselves unexpectedly and squarely blocked out by the pursy body of the divine. With the worthy doctor a few paces behind him, as a corps of reserve, the holy father, brandishing the sword of the domestic in his hand, bade the enemy pause, and poured out upon them a loud volley of characteristic imprecations.

The savages certainly did pause under the anathemas of the priest, but whether from respect to his spiritual or his physical powers, or merely from surprise at his unique figure and mode of warfare, remains uncertain. The hesitation, however, was but for a moment; and had there been no other arms than those Signor Antonio and Doctor Oquetos opposed to their progress, the result of the contest could not have been doubtful. But from the time the drama began to thicken, from the point where real danger declared itself, the maiden Ruby had placed herself in advance of her companions, where all unconsciously she stood in a defiant attitude, like a hawk at bay. Fortunately for those imperiled with her, an antique blunderbuss which hung against the wall now caught her eye; and quick as thought she snatched it down; and resting its heavy brass barrel on the shoulder of the divine, discharged its contents of grape-shot, full in the faces of the foe. With yells of pain and rage they retreated.

The Lady Viola, meanwhile, with her women had retired to the farther extremity of the block-house. The struggle at the entrance was hardly completed by the exploit of the heroic Irish girl, when she discovered the buskined feet of an Indian protruding through the aperture in the roof; and before

she could think of fleeing or giving an alarm, he had leaped down, and stood before her in all the terror of a savage warrior. Though in paint, and trappings, and arms, nothing was lacking, still it was evident at a glance that age could hardly elevate the intruder to the dignity of a man. Indeed, though he aped the warrior well, he could not have numbered more than seventeen summers: and as he paused for a moment within a few paces of the defenseless and shrinking Viola, giving her opportunity to remark his extreme youth, it could not be but that a ray of hope should be gathered from the circumstance. The language of nature is intelligible to all. The Lady Viola spoke, but louder by her posture, her innocence and her beauty, than by her voice. Her face and hands uplifted to Heaven, rather than to her enemy, were white as the snow of his hills; and as her soft tones fell on his ear, and her eyes were again lowered to his, he still paused, and his features relaxed into an expression of mingled admiration and pity. But his weapon remained uplifted, and the struggle with his nature seemed yet of doubtful issue, when he was felled to the ground by a strong arm from behind; and Charles Warwick, springing forward, caught the drooping flower of Spain in his arms.

Chapter Twenty-five.

THE REPULSE; AND DEATH OF ROLLINGBOW.

"A scene of death; where fires—
And blended arms, and white pavillons glow."

WHEN the Indians were expelled from the Spanish works, after their first temporary success, the chief Rollingbow, with several of his warriors, in the darkness and confusion, slipped aside, and remained within the fortification. The events which befell them, and the mischief they came near accomplishing, are already known. Fortunate was it for the inmates of the block-house that Warwick, soon after losing sight of the Onondaga, in the patrol he kept up from point to point, and his search after the cunning savage, who, he suspected, was still in the camp, stumbled on the cabin, in season to finish the good work which Solyman and Ruby O'Brady had so well begun. As he supported the Lady Viola in his arms, he whispered a few words of kind greeting in her ear, promised her protection, and assured her of the safety of her father. From her he turned to the young savage, who, stunned by the blow he had received, was lying at his feet; and calling for a rope, he bound his arms, and led him away to an opposite corner of the room, where the boy sunk down like a vanquished spaniel, and hung his head in sullen silence.

Warwick next dispatched Doctor Oquetos, much against the private wishes of that gentleman, to Don Manuel for a file of men, both to protect the block-house and to guard the prisoner. The detachment soon made its appearance headed by

the veteran Hugh O'Brady; and Signor Antonio, who with most exemplary courage had continued to maintain his position in the door-way, though the big drops of sweat were rolling from his broad face in no moderate shower, was accordingly relieved. Having thus provided for the safety of the Lady Viola and her women, and committed the wounded Solyman into the hands of Doctor Oquetos, Warwick, with a lighter heart than he had known for some days, proceeded again to do duty at the ramparts.

He found Don Manuel and his men resolutely defending the shattered works against a series of irregular attacks, which were prosecuted in a darkness so profound, that it was quite impossible to distinguish an enemy at two paces' distance. The plans of the Indians had evidently been broken. At one moment, with terrifying shouts, they would let fly a volley of balls and arrows, from the effects of which, though sheltered by their embankment, the Spaniards were not always so fortunate as to escape. This perhaps would be succeeded by a complete silence, encouraging for a time the delusive notion that the enemy had withdrawn. But this state of suspense, less endurable indeed than active warfare, would be broken by a sudden call for succor at some unexpected point, where the subtile savages, with characteristic stillness and dexterity, had already secured a footing. From these successes they were not always easily dislodged, but maintained any momentary advantage they might gain with a dogged tenacity which nothing but the swift bolts of death, or the grasp of the whites, hurling them down from the breastwork, were able to overcome.

Thus passed a period of near two hours from the time of the first assault; and the Spaniards, harassed with their incessant and trying duties, ardently longed for day. Thus far the attacks had been confined to the front or north line of the defenses; and, indeed, the river sides had been considered

nearly, if not entirely, inaccessible. But now a sentinel at the right gave the alarm; the cries of the savages at the same time, and from the same quarter, broke upon the night; and simultaneously their shouts and their volleys were renewed along the whole front. It was obvious that they had hazarded a double assault. Reinforcements were at once dispatched to the new point of danger; and amid the uproar and confusion that ensued, the shouts of the assailants and the assailed, the explosion of fire-arms and the clang of steel, no one noted the hurried despairing cries for succor from a still different part of the lines, though caught up and echoed by the iron lungs of Hugh O'Brady. At length the watchful ear of Warwick caught the voice of the Irishman, and with a handful of followers he rushed to the block-house. There he found all safe, but by the direction of Hugh he proceeded to the Delaware side of the encampment, where his arrival was opportune indeed. A half dozen whites were there holding at bay more than twice their number of the enemy; and he at once perceived that the fortress had come near falling by a feint of the cunning foe. While the attention of the besieged had been distracted and turned in other directions, silently they had scaled the precipitous height, taken the sentinels by surprise, and by the time Warwick and his party arrived, had secured a foothold which they were evidently determined to maintain. The frail fence of stakes was broken down; and each savage as he gained the top of the bank, stood on a fair field for combat, his retreat cut off, and hope alone in victory.

Adding his cry for succor to the thousand sounds of the night, Warwick and his followers joined in the melée. But destruction being in their rear, the Indians stood their ground and fought with a desperate bravery worthy of the fame of their Confederacy. At this closing hour of the contest, the knife and tomahawk of the red man drank its due proportion of blood. But despite their determinate courage, it ere long be-

came evident that success was beyond their reach. Additional reinforcements arrived, and they were shortly hemmed in by a circular phalanx, which they found it impossible to break. They wavered; they were forced back closer and closer upon the brink of the precipice; but as they showed no pity, so they asked no quarter; and the Spaniards, irritated by their obstinacy, and smarting with their own wounds, became as merciless and savage as themselves. They hurled the miserable wretches down the gulf, up which with such inconceivable toil and daring they had managed to climb. But the places of those who fell were at once supplied by others, who, as they gained the height, sprung upon their feet, and raised their battle-cry, and shrunk not from a like fate in their turn. They shouted as they struck once more for revenge, when the hope of victory was no longer left them; they shouted as they fell—and their yells rung in the air as they plunged through the thick gloom down the precipice; where their end was announced by the dull sullen sounds which came up from the invisible crags below. But that revenge, so sweet to the Indian, even in defeat and destruction, was not wholly ungratified. Several of the Spaniards were killed. Some of the more resolute of the savages preferred to meet death in the warm grapple; and knife in hand gave it, or received it, in the close embrace; while one Herculean warrior, as he perceived that his hour had come, seized the foeman who was pressing him too closely, and with him in his arms, hugged to his bosom, leaped down the black and cavernous abyss.

While these horrid scenes were in progress, amid the cries and shrieks and noise of fire-arms which arose on all sides of the camp, there was one voice that pealed above all other sounds, and reached the ears of all. It seemed overhead in the air; and many a Spaniard, as he heard that prolonged, wild echoing cry to the onset, experienced a thrill of terror, lest it might be the genius or the demon of the people with

whom he was warring, resting on the mysterious cloud which enveloped them, and urging on the battle. Again and again it rung, and was accompanied by an explosion, as of a musket, which would shake the atmosphere above the combatants; and to each one of these wondrous war-cries and reports the savages would reply with answering shouts, and an impetuous renewal of their unavailing efforts.

But now it was that a sight became visible, which suspended the work of slaughter, and, for a time, held every faculty of the beholders in mute amazement. The wind, which for some minutes had been freshening, suddenly swept down from the north, and in an instant, as it were, rolled back upon the river, like a curtain, the dense canopy of fog which had shrouded the bluff, bringing into view, as though by a stroke of magic, in the center of the encampment, the tall, ragged body of a dry pine, already for fifty feet of its height a dazzling pillar of flame; and far above, in bold relief against the sky, the outline of a human form. A murmur of horror, hardly louder than the breathing in a troubled dream, run through both ranks of the opposing forces, who, but a moment before, had stood braced against each other in the strife, rejoicing in the destruction which they dealt.

Whoever it might be on the tree, he was aware of his danger; and when first perceived, was urging his way down to the bottom; but the subtile element, like the tongue of a serpent, lapped itself round the inflammable trunk, and springing from knot to knot, and arm to arm, seemed likely to meet him half-way, when, turning from the furnace beneath, he sought a present respite in the top, which towered like an enormous mast to the height of a hundred and fifty feet. It was then that Warwick recognized the features, and pronounced the name of Rollingbow. The word was echoed by the Indians, who simultaneously made a movement in advance, but were borne back by the weapons of the Spaniards, and

obliged to remain inactive spectators, without the ability to attempt the rescue of their chief. Indeed, what could be done? Hopeless, utterly, did the task appear, and each one read in the hasty and troubled glance of his neighbor that the doom of the proud Onondaga was sealed—that the whole power and appliances of earth would not suffice to extricate him from his impending fate. Opinions like these were just beginning to find a whispered utterance, when the young Indian, whom we left a prisoner in the block-house, rushed forward, and extending his manacled arms on high, called upon his father!

The appeal was electric, and aroused the inventive energies of the spectators. There was another tree standing within some fifteen feet of that, which now, for more than half its height, was a column of fire; and Warwick, with a sudden thought, sought out among the timbers which lay scattered around, a pole of sufficient length to extend from the one to the other, and of a strength to sustain the weight of a man. Divesting himself of his upper garments, and with a blow releasing the son of Rollingbow from his bonds, he slung the pole to his own back with a cord and commenced the ascent. The youth, at once comprehending his plan, threw himself on the trunk beneath, and followed.

While these preparations were in progress, the one for whose benefit they were intended exhibited no interest whatever in the result. The brightness of the fire below rendered him so minutely visible, that every motion, even, as it seemed, to the swelling of a muscle, was discernible from the ground. He stood on a small limb near the pinnacle of the tree, and sought no other support than what he gained by slightly leaning against the taper and spear-like trunk, which hardly extended above his head. His face and naked bust, stained with those variegated hues and figures which register the achievements, and, at the same time, add so greatly to the

terror inspired by the Indian warrior, were calm and still. No emotion was perceptible, no twitching or shrinking of the flesh, no heaving of the chest. His eye was placid, and mostly fixed upon the sky; and the only movement, save his composed breathing, was that of the lips, as a low guttural chant came down on the winds, which was the death-song of the Onondaga.

With the gazing multitude, from the moment that Warwick and the young Indian commenced their hazardous attempt, all was a noiseless and breathless suspense; and it now became painfully intense, as the development of a moment would demonstrate their failure or success. The youth shouted to his father to descend a few feet, and secure the timber as they should extend it to him; but the old chief moved not, and, if he heard at all, he gave no evidence of it. The whole host of the two embattled lines shouted, but with no better success; and each one raised himself on tiptoe, as Warwick elevated the pole and projected it over upon a cragged arm of the burning tree, which it was designed should receive and support one of its extremities. The descending timber struck several inches from the trunk, the limb gave way, and both fell through the sparkling furnace to the ground together. A universal groan unconsciously escaped from the bosoms of the spectators, as this their only and frail hope was so effectually crushed, and each disposed his mind, as best he could, to await the catastrophe.

A period of but a few minutes elapsed from the time that the situation of the chief was discovered, before the flames, encouraged in their upward tendency by the pitch which was plentifully mingled with the light tinder of the surface of the tree, reached their unfortunate victim. Still he moved not—not even when the lambent tongues curled round his body—nor until the scorching element had completely enveloped him in its folds, when, like the spirit of fire, he seemed to exult in

the black clouds and red whirlwinds which surrounded him, and throwing out his arms, pealed forth his last battle-cry, sprung into the air, and descended like a flaming thunderbolt to the ground.

An armistice had been virtually declared by the interest which both parties had taken in the melancholy fate of Rolling-bow, and now neither seemed disposed to the renewal of the contest. The thirst for blood was slaked, the appetite for carnage glutted; and the Indians, sadly and silently, set about collecting their dead, in which they were assisted by the softened Spaniards. The fire, which they themselves had kindled for the destruction of the sleeping whites, lighted them in their woful search in the trenches and among the rocks, until the majestic pine, the last victim of the element, hastened to its finale by the axe, and the application of pikes to direct it in its descent, tottered and fell, with a broad sheet of flame, and the noise and jar of the thunder. The few prisoners that the Spaniards had taken were released, and the gray of the morning was just looking in from the east, when the wild men of the woods, bearing their dead with them, and among them the body of their chief, sullenly retired from the scene of the late conflict. But as they went, a wild and most melancholy wail came back upon the winds.

Chapter Twenty-six.

THE PRISONER. DOCTOR OQUETOS AND THE WOUNDED.

"Ah, woman! in this world of ours,
What gift can be compared to thee?
How slow would drag life's weary hours,
Though man's proud brow were bound with flowers,
And his the wealth of land and sea,
If destined to exist alone,
And ne'er call woman's heart his own!"

THE Lady Viola had looked on the closing scenes of the drama of the night with a woman's terror and a woman's interest. So rapid had been the changes, and so absorbing in their nature, that as Warwick left her side, his momentary presence, and the words he uttered, as well as the danger from which he had rescued her, and the events which preceded his coming, seemed rather like the vagaries of a dream than a reality. But substantial evidences of the fray were before her; and summoning with a strong effort her scattered energies, she proceeded to look into the condition of her wounded domestic. She found him reclining by the side of the doorway; and with the arrow still sticking in his body, and his head supported by the faithful Ruby, he was patiently awaiting his fate, whatever it might prove. His eye caught that of his mistress as she approached, and though he had shed his best blood in her defense, and perhaps given her his life, his features lighted up with an expression of deep gratitude for the interest she manifested in his behalf. But Doctor Oquetos was already by the side of the suffering man, with his instruments; and the Lady Viola had hardly turned away

when she had the satisfaction of receiving the announcement, that the flint-headed missile was safely extracted, and that though it had made a cut in the poor fellow like the gash of a spear, the wound was by no means mortal.

During the fierce struggle at the outworks which succeeded, the Lady Viola and her women, having recovered from the first shock of terror, busied themselves in the preparation of bandages and other comforts for the wounded. While thus occupied, Viola's attention was occasionally directed toward the prisoner, who remained nearly motionless in the position where he had been placed; but she observed that his eye seemed to seek her out and follow her in all her movements. But his features, so far as she could perceive through the disguise of the colors which distorted them, had lost all traces of ferocity, and were now characterized by the mild and innocent expression of a child. He, indeed, started as that strange war-cry from above first struck his ear—but those wild battle-tones startled all who heard them—and a moment after the youth was calmer than those who watched him. By-and-by she noticed that his eyes were turned to the opening in the roof, through which he had entered, with an all-engrossing interest, which soon amounted to agony, when, springing from the floor, with a shriek of horror, he darted past his guard and vanished from the cabin. A moment more and those who remained became aware of the cause.

They saw him next as in conjunction with Warwick, he made the desperate attempt to save the life of his father. At the culmination of that event, he stood on a lofty arm of the tree which he had ascended, and, on the failure of the effort, became so fully identified in feeling with the object he would succor, that, as his parent let go his hold and sprung, he threw up his own arms, and hardly recovered his identity in season to save himself from accompanying him in his descent. As he came down from the tree, and stood like a statue gazing at the blackened

and shapeless corse of his father, the Lady Viola and many others regarded him with compassion and with tears: and there still he stood gazing, until the Indians finally lifted the body to depart, when mechanically he followed them away.

Thankful that in the midst of so much distress and desolation her own parent still remained to her, with a full heart Viola sought him; and while for a moment she was pressed to his breast, the one who shared next in her anxiety, Captain Warwick, passed into the block-house. The American, though he had remained on active duty to the last, was numbered among the wounded. He now, accordingly, submitted himself into the hands of Doctor Oquetos, who at once proceeded to an investigation of his case.

We are apprehensive that the reader, from some expressions hastily dropped during the progress of this work, may have imbibed, to some extent, an erroneous impression with respect to the erudite Doctor Oquetos. If so, it is a duty we take great pleasure in performing, to set the matter right. Doctor Emanuel Oquetos, then, though by no means a Gengis-Khan, or a Solomon, was, nevertheless, a very respectable practitioner of physic and surgery for the age in which he flourished. He was educated at Salamanca; and what was of far more value in his profession, had had the advantages of English practice. He had been much about the world, and being withal a bachelor of fifty, had had much leisure hanging on his hands, which he had devoted, in a great degree, to serious reflection; or, as he would have expressed it, to profound investigations into the hidden recesses of nature, not excepting the secret and unfathomable caverns of his own, or the human mind. Thus he had projected several brilliant theories, the truth of which—they never having been tested—who will take it upon him to gainsay? He had also, during his sublunar pilgrimage, done something more than invent mere theories, which were never destined to be put in practice: he

had won a name in the field of letters. An ardent devotee to the sublime mysteries of his profession, while yet comparatively a young man, he had published a treatise, which made some noise at the time, at least in the "Salamanca Gazette;" not on the calculus, nor yet the differential calculus, but on meteoric stones; embracing a new theory of the formation of the earth and the solar system. At a later period, when, as would naturally be supposed, his mind had become less erratic and filled with the wisdom of years, like the savans of the French school of medicine, he knelt before the muses; not that he might pour forth in bad verses his professional lucubrations, but that he might, as in due time came to pass, confer on the world a score or two of amatory Spanish lyrics. Soon after the consummation of this last event, it was, that Don Manuel Torrillo went out to Mexico; and receiving the recommendation of the President of the University of Salamanca, who had been made to figure somewhat conspicuously in a Latin inscription to his book of poems, Doctor Oquetos became appended to the expedition as its man of medicine.

When, therefore, Charles Warwick submitted himself into the hands of the learned doctor, it was with a confidence somewhat proportioned to that dignitary's high reputation; and so the professional gentleman himself considered it. He accordingly proceeded to an investigation of the case with a mind quite at ease, and acquitted himself to his own and his patient's entire satisfaction. He first made some general inquiries, and then adjourned to his own tent, not doubting that for the remainder of his morning duties his usual quarters would be sufficiently secure. He then proceeded expeditiously with the dressing, which he performed well and skillfully, violating, however, as he did so, several of his own well-grounded canons of practice. But Doctor Oquetos is but another example from a class of very profound persons, who carry one set of rules in their heads and another in their fingers.

When he had placed the last bandage, he gave his patient a cooling draught, and recommending rest and pertinacious quiet for a few days, promised him, if his directions were followed, a speedy return to strength and health. Thereupon Warwick tottered out of the tent; and the light of the morning being still indistinct, and every one occupied, he proceeded to a point in the outworks least liable to observation, and bidding a sad mental adieu to the fortress and all it contained, let himself out and departed.

Day found the Spaniards in a sorrowful plight. The excitement of the defense; the sights and sounds and necessities of battle were no longer there; and in their place were bodily exhaustion, the groans of the wounded, and the pale, disfigured faces of the dead. But Don Manuel was too good a soldier to suffer his own energies to flag, or those of his men, at such a time as this. He remained in their midst, directing and encouraging them; and not until the disabled had been attended to, the slain gathered and placed in a condition of decent repose, and the shattered works measurably repaired, did he think of rest for himself. Then, indeed, he proceeded to the block-house and inquired for Captain Warwick. Not finding him there, and learning then for the first time that he was wounded, and perceiving that his daughter had worked herself into a condition of considerable alarm on his account, Don Manuel proceeded to the quarters of Doctor Oquetos. Of him he learned that the American officer, having had his wounds properly cared for, left his tent, something more than an hour before, in a very feeble and feverish condition. A painful suspicion of the truth flashed across the mind of the Spaniard, which he hastened to dissipate or confirm. He was soon satisfied that Warwick was no longer in the camp; and furthermore, from the account the physician had given of his injuries, he felt equally certain that if the too scrupulous youth had succeeded in dragging himself so

far into the forest as not to be recovered, he would inevitably perish. Full of distressing apprehensions, he at once instituted a search; and it was not long before the object of his solicitude was discovered, within ten rods of the encampment, lying senseless on the ground. He was borne back into the block-house, and Doctor Oquetos again summoned to his presence.

If Don Manuel still needed evidence of the condition of his daughter's affections, it was now vouchsafed him. The Lady Viola had sustained herself through the multiplied horrors of the night, if not with unyielding strength, at least with a fortitude which on no occasion had wholly deserted her: and now, as the young officer was borne into her presence, she did not shrink, and neither did she fling herself in uncontrollable woe upon the body of him she supposed to be dead, and in truth so ardently loved. She uttered no sound, but turning to retire, her limbs refused their office, and she withered far more quickly than does one of her own native lilies when exposed to the scorching sirocco.

A few anxious minutes supervened, and both Warwick and Viola were restored to animation: the one to a state of weak and feverish existence; and the other, though she strove hard to conceal her feelings, to a condition little more enviable. Don Manuel saw the workings of her mind, but could not chide her.

Chapter Twenty-seven.

CONVALESCENCE. SINGULAR DISPLAY OF AFFECTION ON THE PART OF A NATIVE.

"No! not the dog that watched my household hearth
Escaped that night of blood, upon our plains!
All perished! I alone am left on earth!
To whom nor relative nor blood remains,
No! not a kindred drop that runs in human veins!"

CHARLES WARWICK slowly recovered. His injuries themselves were not serious; but profuse loss of blood, the unnatural exertions to which he had subjected himself after receiving them, and the unquiet condition of his mind, produced a fever and subsequent prostration which time and care could alone dispel. Don Manuel watched over him with the kindness and interest of a parent; and while he lay but partially conscious of what was transpiring around him, he was nevertheless fully aware that the Lady Viola was near; that her soft hands moved his pillow and bathed his burning head, and performed for him a thousand nameless offices, which woman alone can apprehend. She seemed to him like a beautiful flitting shadow, an angel of love and hope and comfort; and sometimes when his fever was high, and his mind wandering, with her by his side, in an ecstasy of delight he would soar quite away from the earth, and bask himself, like a spirit, in the emerald fields and gossamer groves which lie among the dun and yellow clouds. And when he became better, was able to converse, and needed to be amused, she was still with him, ready to talk, or read, or sing, as best comported with his humor or his strength.

But the task that the Lady Viola had imposed upon herself was a severe one. When the period of suspense was over, when the recovery of her charge was pronounced no longer doubtful, she was startled and alarmed at the condition of her feelings. Her anxious watching over the sick bed of their object had shown her their intensity and depth. She called it her weakness, and resolved, like more than a Spartan daughter, to overcome it. She was now, therefore, to fulfill the duties of a friend and a nurse, to cheer her patient on to health again, and at the same time to root out from her own breast those kindlier sentiments, those native flowers of the heart, which unbidden had sprung into being, and almost unnoticed had already attained strength and luxuriance both of leaf and blossom. Why did she not succeed? There was no word of love spoken between them; and both were well aware that the passion could alone be indulged at a mutual and fearful hazard, at the peril of all their hopes in the future. But the eye! it refuses to be chained; and in spite of prudence or effort it betrays the soul. The tongue can deceive, but the eye is the window of the mind; and secrets that the lips refuse to tell are unwarily uttered in a glance. Besides, the soul hath knowledge of its own, which the tongue could not shape words to utter if it would. From the moment that Warwick bore the fair Andalusian dripping from the water, he had been conscious in the depths of his heart that a chain dark or bright, bound them together; but even now the strength and perpetuity of this chain were far from being realized in his external thoughts.

It is probable, nay, certain, that a similar consciousness had existed with the Lady Viola; and hence, though the language of love was unused between them, they understood each other as perfectly as though their mutual feelings had been canvassed a hundred times. Though in this knowledge there was much of pain, though the future was nearly hope-

less, and compassion for each other wrung the very chords of life, there was still in the simple consciousness of loving and being loved, aside from all else, a fount of consolation and of joy, which paled all other pleasures, and threw all other aspirations in the shadow.

Don Manuel was often present; and sometimes as the brooding clouds of their evil destiny were for the time forgotten, and they gave themselves up to the unalloyed enjoyment of the hour, he would sit and gaze on them in silence, with an expression of mingled sadness and affection, when suddenly starting up, he would take a restless turn or two across the room and seek the open air. And Warwick! was he indeed giving himself up to a dream of the delights of life? He loved; and at one moment was buoyant with hope, for his young spirits refused always to be chained down; but the next he was chilled with despair. At times he bitterly cursed himself as one who had crossed the path of an innocent girl, and darkened the prospects of her life, and continued to pursue her, regardless of her welfare or his own. But generally he was able to look upon his actions in a better light. When he coolly examined them, he was unable to perceive that he had done any thing which a strict sense of integrity and duty would not have enjoined. He loved the Lady Viola, and who should blame him? She was in danger, and he had defended her. The end of the fatal passion which he found it impossible to conquer, and still was determined to control, he did not pretend to foresee. When in a hopeful frame, he looked up with trust to the great Architect of events; but when desponding, he was apt to feel that there was no Providence for him. He was also much of a philosopher, and put great faith in the retributive nature of human actions. This was well, if he could only look on far enough to see that this and Providence are in reality the same thing. Again, as he found himself on the verge of desperation, he would break

away per force from the conflict of his feelings into a quieter atmosphere, and say, "Time is the great parent of events. In her womb are all things future hidden. She will evolve my destiny."

In his conversations with Warwick, Don Manuel took an early opportunity to refer to their unpleasant separation on the Hudson. He apologized very frankly for his rudeness on that occasion; and in doing so gave the American, perhaps, a farther insight into his sentiments than he had intended. In speaking of Don Ferdinand de Cassino, he did not succeed in concealing a growing disgust for that individual, which became still more pointedly evident as he alluded to the union of that gentlemen with his daughter. He spoke of the event, however, as one likely to occur; but Warwick saw that his heart revolted, and refused to keep time with his words. It was well understood that the American was a constrained guest at the Spanish camp, and would probably insist on taking his departure so soon as his strength would permit; and Don Manuel accordingly proceeded to combat that supposed intention with great earnestness. He represented to him very truly, that there was no longer safety for him for a day or an hour in the forest, and that to persist in quitting the protection which their numbers gave him for the present, would be to throw his life away; that with respect to his daughter, he relied freely on the young officer's sense of honor and propriety, knowing as he now did the engagement under which she rested. Finally, seizing Warwick by the hand, and pressing it warmly and convulsively, while his lips quivered, he said:

"There are circumstances which it would be improper for me to explain, that leave me for the present without the freedom of choice or will; else, perhaps, I might feel disposed to confer on you the only jewel that now remains to me. But, young sir, whatever I may at any time have said, or whatever

I may hereafter be compelled to do, I beg you will do me the justice to believe that I entertain for you, personally, a deep and unchanging regard; indeed, sir, such a regard, as had God given me a son, I should probably have felt for him. Wherever I may go, whatever I may become, I shall ever feel for you the deepest solicitude; and whether in wealth or poverty, in honor or disgrace, whatever I may properly command shall be yours, even to my life."

The heart of Warwick was too full for reply. He returned the pressure of the hand that trembled in his own, in silence; and the Spaniard left him. For an hour the young man was in a whirl of conflicting emotions. The knowledge of Don Manuel's real sentiments toward him gave him unbounded satisfaction; but then, on the other hand, he now felt certain, of what he had before only suspected, that the Spaniard was involved in some toil which Don Ferdinand de Cassino had either set, or of which he controlled the springs: and is it matter of surprise that the ardent American ended with a resolve, that that toil, whatever it might be, should be broken? As to the delicate point of his quitting the protection of the camp, the question was very properly adjourned over; inasmuch as his utmost strength for the present barely sufficed to enable him to sustain his weight for a single turn across the floor.

The reveries of varying hue and shadow, in which Warwick habitually indulged when alone, were one day interrupted by the entrance of Hugh O'Brady, followed by the son of Rollingbow. There was a touching sadness in the looks, and a native grace in the deportment of the young savage, as he approached his late captor, and knelt by the side of his couch.

"I have buried my father," said he, in his own tongue, "and return to you. I am yours."

"Good Alwyn," returned Warwick, much affected, "I have

no claims on you; go back to your family again. Go, and become like your father, a great warrior, and a chief of your people."

The eye of the youth sparkled for an instant at the thought, but it was momentary.

"No," he replied. "The warrior's strong arm is weak: his fleet step is slow. Alwyn has no one to teach him. Rollingbow, the terror of his foes, the light and joy of his friends, is dead. Who is there to care for his son? I will stay with the white man."

"But, Alwyn," said Warwick, "where is your mother? Where are your brothers and your sisters? They will mourn for the lost one, when their eyes no longer behold you."

"Alwyn has none," returned the savage. "The deer has its kind, the moon has its little moons to go with it, but Alwyn is alone. His people are wroth with the white chief. They have felt the power of his arm. They seek his blood: but the white chief loved Rollingbow; and should not Alwyn be by his side to defend his life, lest his white dove weep, and her eyes become dim like a star when it is hid in a cloud?"

Warwick's heart was again reached by this singular exhibition of regard; and perceiving that the youth was in earnest, he could not find it in his nature to refuse him.

"Well, well," said he, kindly, "you shall stay with me if you like; and so far as I can, I will supply to you the place of the noble father you have lost. But I have no home to offer you, no roof, no quiet lodge, no corn, no game: and soon, perhaps, my boy, if you link your fate with mine, the sky or the matted trees of the wood will be our only covering, and the moss and the leaves our bed."

But this prospect for the future had nothing in it to alarm the young Indian. He was therefore suffered to domesticate himself with the master he had chosen, and soon became a favorite with him. At first he was indisposed to extend his

acquaintance further. Don Manuel was struck with the singularity of his conduct, and gazed with admiration on the well-turned limbs and pleasing countenance of the youth; but when he approached him closely, the savage drew back with a haughty dignity which the Spaniard himself could have hardly equaled. A word from Warwick, however, restored his equanimity, and he suffered himself to become the friend of the Castilian.

It was now a period of dull inaction in the camp. The slain had been consigned to their last home, the wounded were recovering, rest had recruited the men; and since the night of the assault no enemy had shown himself. Nevertheless, as yet Don Manuel had deemed it prudent to restrict his followers to the works. In this posture of affairs, even the arrival of the tawny son of Rollingbow was hailed by the encampment as an era; and there was a disposition manifested in all quarters to extend to him courtesy and kindness. These attentions were received by the youth with that calm and stoical indifference so often remarked as a striking characteristic of his race. Once, indeed, he seemed moved. The Lady Viola started and changed color, as she recognized the young warrior who had put her life in jeopardy; and the painful expression which shadowed his countenance in return, showed with sufficient clearness that he understood the cause of her alarm.

Doctor Oquetos received the young aborigine with the same abundant ceremonies which, many years before, he had framed with much ingenuity, and observed on the fortunate occasion of his introduction to a plenipotentiary of one of the crowned heads of Europe; while the good Father Antonio saluted the youth in a manner altogether paternal, expressing at the same time the ardent hope that he might be found duly prepared in spirit to renounce his Pagan formulas, and receive the holy and true faith. Alwyn, however, comprehended

little of what was meant by these demonstrations. He established himself in the quarters of Warwick, and in attendance on him. Nor could any inducement often draw him thence. There his thoughts and affections seemed to center, and there the duties he had prescribed for himself to end. Of the wants and wishes of his master he was ever watchful, and in his presence, though there remained a pensive expression on his features, he seemed contented and happy.

Chapter Twenty-eight.

A MYSTERY EXPLAINED. THE SUSQUEHANNA. THE BEND MOUNTAIN AND THE NEW CAMP.

"The sun looked from his lofty cloud,
While flowed its sparkling waters fair—
And went upon his pathway proud,
And threw a brighter luster there;
And smiled upon the golden heaven,
And on the earth's swett loveliness,
Where light, and joy, and song were given
The glad and fairy scens to bless."

A FEW days more, and Warwick found himself again in the possession of some portion of that strength which, on the morning subsequent to the reception of his wounds, he had in vain endeavored to summon to his aid. He was able to leave his tent and look abroad on the face of nature, and witness those few pastimes in which the bounds of the camp permitted the Spaniards to indulge. Viola and her father were generally his companions; and as they enjoyed the same sights, or recalled in conversation all that had occurred since they first met—the shipwreck at night on the wild Jersey shore, the few fleeting weeks which succeeded in New York, their passage up the romantic Hudson, and their subsequent perils in the wilderness—or, again, as the beautiful and chivalrous land of Spain, or the wondrous regions of the New World, where mines of wealth lie hidden in the hills, and the rivers run with gold, formed subjects of discourse; and pictures of the past and far-away and beautiful, were, by the enchanting wand of fancy, conjured before the mind, the dangers of the present and the uncertainties of the future were

forgotten. The Lady Viola became blithe again as a lark. Soon, emboldened by their apparent security, they ventured without the confines of the camp, and again the groves were awakened by the music of her voice and her guitar. With Warwick, time flew on fairy pinions. He could not speak of love—he dared not think of love; and so in very desperation he resolved that love should no longer trouble him, but kept dreaming all the more. With his white bird, as Alwyn had poetically christened her, hanging on his arm, he yielded himself to the bewilderment and fascination of the hour.

But those halcyon days—those amber visions, which depend so much for their vitality on inactivity and an undisturbed fancy, were suddenly interrupted by the return of Michael Johnson. His surprise at meeting Warwick again in the company of the Spaniards was great, but was forgotten in his unfeigned satisfaction. He took him by the hand, and saluted him with an unconscious warmth of feeling, as unaccountable to himself as to those who witnessed it.

The intelligence of which Johnson was the bearer was soon communicated. Favored by the darkness of the night, and by the concentration of the Indians, as it now appeared, for their attack on the camp, the party, headed by Don Ferdinand and himself, had met with no interruption. The evening of the subsequent day brought them to their place of destination; and no time was lost in selecting a proper position, and entering on the erection of permanent accommodations, and strong and defensible works.

The reasons for all this preparation and outlay of labor, as well as the mystery which had shrouded the movements of the Spaniards, were now for the first time explained to Warwick. In their early explorations of the American continent, mostly in search of the precious metals, the Spaniards were believed to have penetrated regions of which no public record remained. The present territory was one of them. Don Manuel was in

the possession of an ancient map, which had come into his hands while in Mexico; in which the route, thus far traveled by the party, was minutely and accurately laid down, even to the mountain lying in the great bend of the Susquehanna River, on which the advanced fortification had been located; and which was represented to contain a gold mine of unusual richness. Thus far every indication had been propitious. There had been no difficulty in finding the particular mountain. Its bald brow, and the features of its rocky sides, answered the description; and even the roughly marked indenture which was represented to open into the mine itself, had been discovered. As *prospecting* for treasure was the mania of that day, as it has become again of this, it was in the common order of events that the Spaniards, when forced into exile, should undertake the expedition in which they were engaged. Johnson, during the greater portion of Don Manuel's sojourn in Mexico, had been in his employ. In one of his Western scouts, as has already been said, the veteran had dropped down into New Spain, where he had been so fortunate as to use his brawny arm in the rescue of Don Manuel from the fury of a mob, which had given him an attached and powerful friend. He was able, of his own knowledge, to verify the general correctness of the ancient map, and readily became one of the party.

It was a pleasant summer morning as the tents were struck, and our adventurers, bidding adieu, with some melancholy thoughts, to a spot which had been to them so pregnant of events, took up their line of march. Not a cloud obscured the horizon: the air in that primitive and sylvan region was cool and bracing; and, above all, the information they had gathered from Alwyn of the crippled condition of the savages, and the report of their scouts, that their path ahead was clear, and the assurances of Johnson, contributed to clothe each countenance with cheerfulness. The hardy and patient veteran

again took his post in the van; and Warwick, though still feeble, preferring the back of a horse to the toilsome carriage of a litter, was consigned to the center. His position, as he could no longer occupy the post of danger, was all that he could desire; near, or as the nature of the way permitted, by the side of the Lady Viola and her father; and supported in the rear by those two dignitaries, on whom separately rested the care of the bodies and the souls of their companions.

The passage of the Delaware was safely effected, and they entered on a region of country wild and romantic in the extreme. There was no sign that a civilized foot had ever trodden the mazes they were threading. There was no mark of the huntsman's axe, no remains of the white man's fires; but on the contrary, old Indian trails, and temporary Indian camps, and blazed trees, marked with fantastic savage symbols, the meaning of which no one save Johnson could at all divine. Viola sighed as they left the valley of the river. During her fearful travel and sojourn in the woods of America, there had been little to recall to her recollection any thing that she had ever seen before. The hills, trees, shrubs, and flowers were the product of another hemisphere from her own. The running waters were alone the same. Indeed, there is a familiar look in the rivers of a foreign land which we find in little else. Each clime clothes its mountains and its valleys with a verdure of its own, or the hand of man has turned them to unfamiliar uses; but the clear, pure water from the springs, with its silver sheen and mystic life-giving powers, the rocks and boulders in the river's bed, the pebbled shore, the smooth or rushing current, the fringed and winding stream, and the leafy, sparkling brooklet, in many of their features, will always answer to the water-courses of our home. And thus it is that we ever greet the rivers as our friends.

The reader will readily imagine the grave conversations which occurred between Doctor Oquetos and Signor Antonio;

and the sensible things that were said by Captain Warwick and the Lady Viola, during the journey from the Delaware, over the hilly region that intervenes, to the valley of the Susquehanna. But that mental occupation which charms away fatigue was quite beyond the reach of the unlettered men who constituted the great majority of the party: and notwithstanding the beauty of the day, and of many of the landscapes that met the eye, the march was necessarily toilsome. At times they ascended a progressive series of hills, swell after swell, each one, ere its summit was attained, promising to be the last; and again they descended into some deep vale, where their way lay through a thick mass of vegetation, difficult to penetrate; or down some tangled dell, or frowning gorge, by the side of a foaming torrent, or under some rocky spur, which hung in frightful shadows over their heads. The interminable forests were much the same as they had seen before. In many places the pine, spearlike and evergreen, predominated; and, indeed, stretched away in a majestic colonnade, with dark and matted roof, and many-pointed spires for miles; but more generally, other trees were intermingled. Some of them, especially the smaller ones, were rich with blossoms; and the Lady Viola did not disdain to receive, at the hand of Warwick, a branch of the white and spotted dogwood. Though the name is far from poetical, the gift met with favor. She bound the delicious flowers with a silken cord, and wore them in her girdle.

The night was passed in safety, and the second day brought them into the valley of the Susquehanna. As they descended from the mountains, catching glimpses through the trees of this beautiful river, whose waters are clear as crystal, whose banks are hung with the richest verdure, and whose valleys, in all the different forms of loveliness and landscape, are unsurpassed, the dullest eye was filled with animation, and the coldest bosom experienced a throb of pleasure. It was God

talking to them through the forms of earth, and inviting them to become pure and harmonious like his works.

Passing up the river a few miles, they came to the spot which had been selected for the crossing, where had been provided the necessary means, and where Don Ferdinand awaited them. The Lady Viola saw her betrothed approaching, and every thing that was charming around her faded from her sight. At that moment the brightest scenes of earth would not have sufficed to buoy up her sinking spirits. The unexpected sight of Warwick seemed to have an equal effect on the chevalier. He changed color; and Don Manuel, leading him aside, spent some minutes with him in private conversation. On their return, he coldly saluted the American, and his sign of recognition was acknowledged as cavalierly as it was given. He, however, attached himself sedulously to the Lady Viola; and Warwick, as in duty bound, but with a pang at his heart, fell back.

In a short time the river was safely crossed, and they entered on the green Indian meadows beyond, covered with a fragrant carpet of grass, and shaded by a few venerable trees: and soon thereafter they commenced the ascent of that mountain, whose bare head, as it lay in relief against the sky, had long since been pointed out in the distance by Johnson as that portion of earth supposed to conceal within its bosom the object of the Spaniards' golden dreams. It was the wildest spot they had yet encountered, fitted to conjure up slumbering superstitions: and the men, as they toiled up its sides, were struck with a sensation of awe, and already imagined that they discovered in its atmosphere a strange and mysterious influence. The Lady Viola looked with a different feeling upon the huge rocks, the precipitous ascents, and somber ravines by which they were surrounded. In a better frame of mind she would have enjoyed the scene; now it could do little more than to distract her thoughts from objects

of a still deeper gloom. As a counterpart, the birds were singing cheerfully around, as though they found no fault with the rugged but majestic hill; and the air, redolent with the scent of thyme, and other undistinguished sweets, showed that they were still in a land of flowers.

The site of the camp was a rocky prominence, midway up the mountain, steep and difficult of approach, and sheltered on the north by the still projecting eminence, from which it was divided by a narrow ravine. This had already been considerably deepened by digging. The main works for defense were similar in kind, but of a stronger and more permanent nature than those they had left behind them on the Delaware, and contained within an enlarged area several comfortable log houses.

At this distance from the base of the hill, the vegetation, though still plentiful, was of the smaller growth. The verdant laurel, with its thick satin leaf and splendid clusters of flowers, spread away in immense tracts, here and there interspersed with little clumps of birch or elm or other hardy shrub, and an occasional low and knotted pine or dwarfed chestnut, which seemed set as land-marks in the midst of a wilderness of bushes. The sides of the steep ascents and the edges of the rocks were fringed with honeysuckles, wild roses, thyme, whortleberries, and other flowering and odoriferous shrubs and plants, which filled the air with their agreeable perfumes.

In the distance the prospect presented a succession of hills and dales, luxuriant with their primitive forests. East and south a gentle depression of the trees, with the blue water here and there peeping through, and glancing in the sunlight like flowing silver, marked for a long distance the course of the Susquehanna, as it came down from the north, and circling round the mountain, turned again toward the region whence it came. Immediately abreast, where the river was broadly

in view, a small green island lay sleeping on its bosom, on which grew a few venerable white-armed sycamores and weeping willows: and these, with the water prospect, the fringed and flowered banks, and Indian meadows, completed the picturesque landscape, from the camp.

Chapter Twenty-nine.

ANOTHER CAMP-FIRE TALE, WHICH WILL BE FOUND IN THE END TO BE INTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH OUR STORY.

"There is a song of sorrow,
The death-dirge of the gay,
That tells ere dawn of morrow
These charms may melt away,
That sun's bright beam be shaded,
That sky be blue no more,
The summer flowers be faded,
And youth's warm promise o'er."

IT is by no means the design of this work to chronicle, step by step, the labor and the alternate hopes and fears of the Spaniards, in their search after the hidden treasures of the earth. Suffice it, that across the ravine already mentioned, in the side of the mountain north of the camp, the excavation was commenced. As the work progressed, encouraging evidences of the proximity of the precious metal were not wanting. Indeed, it seemed clear that the present adventurers were by no means the first visitors to this secret vault of nature; but that the hill, at this particular spot, had been penetrated before. Not only were loose specimens of apparent ore obtained, but often particles or scales, as it seemed, of the pure gold itself. The stones that were thrown out were rough and broken, and had evidently been fractured by force: and on a closer inspection, the marks of the drill were clearly discoverable. Small deposits of wood-coal, cinders, and ashes were often met with: and under all these favorable auspices, the work rapidly advanced; and very shortly

the excavation assumed the appearance of a dreary and capacious cave.

There were an abundance of deer and other wild game in the vicinity; and the hunt, a necessary resort for the raising of supplies, furnished an agreeable relief to the labor of the mine. There were also Indian settlements in the neighborhood, particularly at Oquago, Cookhouse, and Chenang, near the junction of the Chenango River with the Susquehanna: and ere long, a cautious intercourse with them was established; until, though rarely, some buskined savage dared to venture within the precincts of the fort; where he gazed with wonder on their social arrangements, their implements, and their unintelligible labor.

The little varieties of incident which the circumscribed operations of the party afforded, while the novelty remained, were, nevertheless, matters of sufficient interest. Thus the daily report from the mine, the excitements and perils of the chase, the meeting with an occasional group of half a dozen panthers, or with the rattlesnake, that terror of the American woods, and their hazardous negotiations with the natives for a scanty supply of corn, furnished for a time abundant food for conversation to the unoccupied.

The events of the day were usually discussed in the evening, either in Don Manuel's lodge, or in the little open area which adjoined it; by those whose standing permitted them to mingle in the social circle of the chief. The veteran Johnson was ever welcome; and the Lady Viola never tired of his simple, unobtrusive ways and unpretending but sensible discourse. On one of those evenings the little coterie having been found particularly harmonious and happy, not less from the presence of Johnson and Warwick, than from the absence of Don Ferdinand, who was confined to his own quarters by a slight indisposition, the Lady Viola took occasion to recall to the recollection of the old man an implied promise he had

made her, to give her some further account of his early life. The veteran understood the point of allusion at once. Reclining his head on his hand, he sat for some moments in silence.

"There can be little interest in the story," at length he said, "to any one but me. Lucy died, and I've not yet forgot her. But her pleasant face none of you did ever see; and why should you be called to grieve over her sorrows or mine? Still, if you wish it, I will tell you about her, for I should not be niggardly of words, lady, when you are willing to listen."

All expressed an anxiety to hear; and Johnson, composing the visible emotion which had disturbed his rugged features, proceeded:

"I have told you before, lady, that I was a wild youngster, one at whom the old folks shook their heads, and wondered how he'd end. Still, Lucy, the handsomest girl of the town, and the gentlest of all creaters, loved me. We were born and bred in the same neighborhood, within a stun's throw of each other; and when we were little and went to school or meetin', we used to go hand in hand together, like brother and sister. I called her my little wife long before I knew the meaning of the word; and in all my plans of life, when I should be one-and-twenty, Lucy, with her smiling blue eyes, made a part.

"At length we married; and though poor, we had enough, and were contented and happy. My home, with Lucy by my side, was the place where I always liked to be; and while she lived, I never wanted to rove. The birth of our little Paul—"

Warwick, who thus far had been an attentive listener, here gave a sudden start, and arose from his seat. He put his hand to his head; a shadow had flitted through his brain, but he could not catch it. Johnson inquired if he was ill. He declared himself quite well, apologized for the interruption he had occasioned, and the old man continued:

"The birth of our little Paul, whose story is already known to you, daughter, increased our happiness; which indeed we had considered perfect before; and if even I thought it might change, that it would not always last, 'twas when I looked on Lucy's delicate form, which seemed made of too slender materials to endure. Still among the neighbors she was called pretty healthy, though not very tough; and they used to say to me, they guessed she'd do middlin' well as I was pretty careful of her. I hoped so too. She was cheerful as the day was long; and thus we lived till Paul was about two years old.

"At this time the Indians were getting uneasy, and the authorities reckoned they were plotting mischief ag'in the settlements. Steps were accordingly taken to guard ag'in their designs; and as our town was thought to be very much exposed, a company of soldiers was quartered among us as a guard.

"The captain who commanded them, lady, proved to be a villain, a disgrace to nater and mankind. He gained access to my house, where every honest man was free to come, as a friend; but he turned out such an enemy as 'tis very hard ever to forgive. My Lucy attracted his notice; and when I was away from home, he would steal in, and insult her with the story of his wicked love. She, poor thing, was horror-struck; but she didn't forget her duty to me and her God, nor her spirit as a woman. She bid him be gone, and threatened to tell me; but, as she afterward said, he laughed her in the face, and clappin' his sword with his hand, told her, if she cared for my life, not to trouble me with complaints about him.

"An officer, in those days, was powerful, and his path not safely to be crossed by one like me; and Lucy, poor soul, alarmed for my safety, feared to tell me of the villain. But I see that somethin' lay heavy on her mind, and after beggin' me on her knees not to do any thing rashly, she informed me what had passed.

"Unmanned by her tears and entreaties, I kept quiet; but after that, staid about home, and watched over the safety of my family, as a hen watches over her brood when it is threatened by a hawk. It was that very day in the afternoon, while I was at work in a field near by, that I discovered the treacherous Englishman makin' toward my house. I hurried home; before I got there, though I wasn't a minute behind him, I heard Lucy scream. Snatchin' the handiest weapon by my door, which happened to be a handspike, I rushed in. Roused by my approach, the scoundrel let go of Lucy, who fell senseless on the floor, and confronted me with his sword. Enraged beyond all bounds of endurance, with one blow which his sword couldn't stop, I laid him helpless at my feet.

"My first care was to restore Lucy; after which, with much ado, I succeeded in recallin' the breath of life into our enemy. I then sent for some of his soldiers, who came and took him away. He was badly hurt, but left swearing the most dreadful revenge. Lucy was almost distracted, and entreated me to fly. But I would not leave her; and besides, I did'nt feel that I had done any thing wrong; and it is contrary to nater for an honest man to run away.

"About an hour after, a file of soldiers with a constable came to our house, and bound me, and took me off to prison. I would'nt resist the law. But my poor Lucy, if she was nearly distracted before, now she was frantic. She followed along in the road after us, with tears that would have melted a stone; but the heartless soldiers, instead of pitying her, taunted her, and heightened her grief into an agony of terror by tellin' her that I would most probably be hung, or shot at any rate, if the captain died, which was next to sartain. This was too much. I couldn't stand it. My heart swelled up till it was too big for my bosom, and almost stopped my breath. By a sudden spring I broke the cords that confined my arms, and knocking down one or two of the guards, who

were between me and Lucy, I caught her in my arms. They had just raised their guns to fire; but when they see that I didn't intend to run away, they forbore; and some of them, I believe, were at last touched by Lucy's sufferin', for we were permitted to go the rest of the way together. I tried all I could to comfort her as we went along.

"When we came to the jail, we were forced to separate. They wouldn't allow her to go in; but my kind neighbors by this time were gathering round, and after a while succeeded in coaxin' her away. They took her to her lonesome home; but they were very kind. They see that she wanted for nothin'; they cared both for her and her little boy; and when they learnt the particulars of our difficulty, they were loud in demanding my freedom. Oh, they were kind indeed; and as my enemy recovered, they kept watch and guard over the treasures in my house.

"I will pass by, lady, the daily pains and anxieties of my imprisonment, which extended to a period of two months. The fore part of the time I saw Lucy a few minutes about every day, through the grate; after that, they told me she was not very well, and the weather was so bad that it wasn't thought best for her to venter out. The officer, meanwhile, had got well, or nearly so; and either giving up his evil designs, or alarmed at the clamor of the town, which was every day increasing, till my neighbors threatened to tear down the jail; or fearin', perhaps, that the whole matter would come before his superiors, and possibly the Governor himself, the charges ag'in me were withdrawn, my prison doors were opened, and I was once more restored to my Lucy.

"But, oh, how changed she was! I found her pale as the whitest marble, and so weak that she could scarcely stand alone. I see at once that her trouble had broke her heart; and though she smiled and tried to be happy ag'in, she couldn't get it out of her mind. Ever after, daughter, she was a mere

child. Day by day and week by week she sunk away; the strings of her spirit were cracked, and couldn't be mended; and like the frightened bird that trembles in your bosom, she trembled, and by turns she wept, till she died."

The old man covered his face with his hands, and shook like the leaf of an aspen. With him many years were compressed into moments, and the distant past had become again the present before him. His listeners were deeply affected, too deeply for words; and as he closed his relation, Warwick again sprung to his feet, and vague shadows which he could not hold, rushed upon his mind and heart. The Lady Viola burst into tears, and the silent drops coursed down the cheeks both of her father and the young American. But they were not ashamed to shed them.

Chapter Thirty.

STARLIGHT REVERIES AND SUNLIGHT DREAMS.

"How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air.
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain
Breaks the serene of heaven;
In full-orbed glory yonder Moon divine
Rolls through the dark-blue depths,
Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!"

WARWICK went to bed, but not to sleep. The shrieks of the unfortunate Lucy rung in his ears, and her sinking form and pale corse floated before him. The artless tale of Johnson had opened the fountains of his heart, and the current of his feelings refused to be stayed. He could not drive the recollection from his mind. The sweet and confiding creature, as he had depicted her to himself, her short and happy summer, before the spoiler came, and her untimely end, were graven on his imagination, and possessed him, so it seemed, as vividly as though the reality had actually passed before his eyes. And now he could account for the fits of listlessness and abstraction, which, in periods of inactivity, he had frequently noticed in the rugged and weather-beaten hunter; as well as the tinge of sadness which generally shaded his features. He was indeed a man of sorrows. The storms of life had beat harshly upon him; his sun had set in the morning; and all besides had been darkness, storm, and winter,

save the dim and uncertain hopes which cling with us all to the unknown and invisible future.

Tired at length of his restless couch, Warwick arose. The night was bland; and partially dressing himself, he stepped out of doors. Leaning against the logs of the rude cabin he gazed upward among the illimitable stars, and pursued the train of his reflections. Suddenly a flash of soft light waved along the top of the mountain above him, and in a moment was gone. Soon again it reappeared, at first faint, then glowing with a deeper luster, and then it vanished as before. But shortly it returned again, shooting higher and higher with a deeper blush; and other jets from other parts of the horizon streamed up and up, in lambent lines and waves of rose and gold, until they met at the zenith, and the whole heavens were aglow with pale rivers of flame, and coming and passing coruscations. Soon, however, they began to fade, and growing fainter and fainter and fainter, were no more.

For the first time in his life Warwick had beheld the mysterious northern lights. But his excited mind could not stop there. His thoughts pushed beyond, through the blue vault of night, where the sight can not penetrate; and reveled in the magnificence of millions of spheres floating in such glorious light and beauty. He stood, in mind, where no man had ever stood, and saw what can not be written.

By-and-by he came back to earth, and thought again of the bright and lovely things it contains. He thought of Johnson, of Lucy, of the Lady Viola, of himself, and the waywardness of his fate—fatherless, motherless, nameless; the child of want, the scholar of charity, the soldier of fortune, and the sport of destiny. Man, said he, is indeed a bark set afloat on the rough ocean of life, beset with shoals, with calms and tempests, without a pilot or a rudder. But the next moment the monitor within made himself heard, and preached to him

in the still night, teaching him lessons which sooner or later all must learn; recalling the events of his own life, until he was fain to confess with a saddened and sweetened heart, that there is a Power that overlooks us kindly, and while He leaves us in some good sense to our own choice, that we may be ourselves, protects and holds us all in the hollow of His hand.

But the old man and his Lucy! the text round which had circled an important train of thought—he could not yet dismiss them from his mind. Two hours after he found himself still in the starlight leaning against the logs. His body had been quiet, but the mind, that most wonderful intangible thing, which was his very self, had been at work. It had vindicated its own divinity by an effort to create; and the result was as follows:

THE OLD MAN'S SORROW.

The pale stars are beaming
Over land and sea,
The north lights are streaming
High and cheerily;
While the old man is dreaming,
If asleep he be,
Of his Lucy that is gone,
Gone, gone, forever!

The years that have circled,
And made that old man gray,
Since the bride of his bosom
Was given back to clay,
Have failed to soothe his sorrows,
To him they're but a day,
For his Lucy she is gone,
Gone, gone, forever!

When the nights are creeping
O'er the dewy earth,
And others all are sleeping,
Or full of rosy mirth,

Why is the old man weeping?
'Tis for his home and hearth,
For his Lucy that is gone,
Gone, gone, forever!

And when the moon is breaking,
When the blushing skies
Their rosy tints are taking
To charm all other eyes,
Why is the old man waking,
So lothly to arise?
Oh, his Lucy she has gone,
Gone, gone, forever!

And when the day is whiling
Its sunny hours away,
And he around is smiling,
As though his toil were play,
With light cheer all beguiling,
Why sighs he old and gray?
Oh, his Lucy she is gone,
Gone, gone, forever!

Wilt thou never come again,
Sweet bride of his youth,
With the sunlight of thine eyes,
And thy heart of holy truth?
Never, never; but the old man
Shall go to thee, in sooth—
He will go where thou art gone,
And cherish thee forever!

Warwick went to bed and slept. In his dreams the Lady Viola stood before him. No, it was not Viola. The gentle expression was like hers; but then the hair was the color of sunlight and the eyes were blue. It was Lucy. He perceived it clearly now; and though he knew she was dead, it did not surprise him at all to see her. She did not smile, but her face was radiant with loveliness and peace, and she looked very benignantly upon him as she spoke. He did not hear her voice, and yet he knew very well that she spoke, and he

understood her perfectly as she called him her child, and assured him that the great Father of All was kind to his children, and that, by-and-by, he should come and live with her in her home of glory.

He awoke. As he opened his eyes he almost saw the beautiful vision before him; and was quite sure that a soft glow of roseate light still lingered in the room. He reflected on the incident with surprise, it was so life-like, and turned the words over and over in his mind; and by-and-by, as morning was about breaking, he slept again; and this time without dreams.

Chapter Thirty-one.

THE RIVALS. A HAND TO HAND RECKONING.

Ham. What news?
Ros. None, my lord, but that the world is grown honest.
Ham. Then is doomsday near; but your news is not true. Let me question more in particular.

THE hue of health was again restored to the cheek of Warwick. The blood coursed merrily in his veins: an undefined hope was in his heart: he looked abroad on the face of nature, even the wilderness, with joy: he breathed the inspiring air with delight; his step was elastic, his arm was strong; and he felt that he was himself once more. Little or nothing had passed between him and Don Ferdinand from day to day. The Spaniard seemed studiously to avoid him; and that he might do so, even relinquished, to a considerable extent, the society of the Lady Viola and her father. To this Warwick could not object; but still, as his health became reinstated, and the crisis of his destiny appeared yet distant as ever, he began seriously to feel the tardy movement of events, and the extreme delicacy of his position. Don Manuel, it is true, did every thing in his power to render him contented and happy: but latterly he had made no reference to his own private affairs; while day by day, it was evident, a deeper shade of anxiety was gathering on his brow; and Warwick could not but apprehend that his own presence might be adding to his perplexities!

One day as he was occupied with thoughts like these, he strolled down the side of the mountain to the river; and while walking along the bank, he was surprised to see Don Fer-

dinand approaching. The chevalier accosted him with an affability to which he had long been a stranger.

"Captain Warwick," said he, "I owe you some explanations and apologies, which it is now my intention to render, if you will receive them. Obligated to you as I am, as we all are, indeed, it manifestly belongs to me to make the advances toward a reconciliation between us. It is my wish that the past, or whatever has been unpleasant in the past, may be forgotten."

"If Don Ferdinand is in earnest," returned Warwick, "he will find an attentive listener; and one disposed to meet him half way."

"Very well," said the Spaniard. "And now to avoid all misconceptions for the future, it is necessary that there should be a precise understanding between us on some certain points. Each should know his own ground, and confine himself to it. You are doubtless aware of the nature of my connection with the Lady Viola Torrillo?"

By this time the American perceived that the interview might terminate in a very different manner from what its commencement portended. Anxious, however, to avoid an unpleasant altercation, he simply replied,

"I am."

"She is my affianced wife," continued Don Ferdinand: "and may I be permitted to inquire if Captain Warwick recognizes the validity of the engagement subsisting between us?"

"If recognized by the lady and her father, most assuredly I do," replied Warwick.

"Has not Don Manuel informed you that such is the fact?"

"He has."

"Then I am to conclude, that the asseverations of those who pretend to say that Captain Warwick follows the track of the

Spaniards, to pour his tale of love into the ear of the Lady Viola, and to steal her affections from her lawful lord, are groundless and false?"

"You are," replied Warwick. "But, Don Ferdinand, understand me not as saying that I am indifferent to the esteem of the lady of whom you speak. Still I may freely assert, that since I became acquainted with the contract existing between yourself and the Lady Viola, or rather between your mutual parents, I have respected it. The dangers which have beset you in our American woods, and my recent wounds, I suppose, are a sufficient explanation of my presence with you now."

The chevalier listened impatiently. Several times he was on the point of interrupting Warwick; but when at length the latter came to a pause, he hesitated, and seemed at a loss what to say. The American continued:

"Instead of listening to apologies, Don Ferdinand, I have thus far submitted to be catechised by you, and have answered your questions civilly. I trust now you will proceed with the purpose you expressed at the outset."

But the chevalier would not relinquish his point.

"You love Viola?" said he.

"I do."

"Swear by your honor, as a soldier, that your love shall be silent—that you will never breathe it in her ear, never interfere between her and me!"

"I can not—I will not," replied Warwick, emphatically. "The future is a wide field. I will deal fairly and justly by you, Don Ferdinand, but I will not tie myself up for all time. The lady and the fates must judge between us."

"Ha!" said Don Ferdinand, turning pale; while every nerve became tense, and he spoke through his clenched teeth. "The fates then shall pass a sudden judgment!"

With this, quick as thought, he slipped a stiletto from the

sleeve of his right arm, and sprung upon his rival. Though unprepared for an essay of this nature, Warwick was so fortunate as to seize the descending hand; and found little difficulty in wrenching the weapon from the grasp of the desperate Spaniard: and throwing it from him, the blue waves of the Susquehanna closed over it. But as he did so, Don Ferdinand tore away from his hold and drew his sword.

Why it was that the assailant did not resort to his pistols, for he had a brace about his person, must be left to conjecture. Perhaps he felt more at home with the dagger; and afterward, relying somewhat on the forbearance of the American, preferred to avail himself of his acknowledged skill with the instrument he now brandished in his hand.

"Sir Warwick," said he, and his dark, bloodless lips quivered as he spoke, "this world is not wide enough for us both. One of us must give way. You are my bane, my curse, my demon that tempts me to sin. I would rather sleep with Pluto, this night, than under the same sky with you. Come on, then! I give you a fair field."

"A fair field!" repeated Warwick with contempt. "I will not meet an assassin on such terms. Don Ferdinand, I do not want any difficulty with you: leave me! I will not fight you."

"Coward! hind! serf!" said Don Ferdinand, elevating the fingers of his left hand in derision; "you shall fight, or run."

"Sir," returned Warwick very deliberately, "I warn you to be careful, and not tempt me too far. There are many reasons why I would not harm you, nor be harmed by you. Your imputations I despise. I would not sully my sword by crossing it with yours. The scaffold alone can do you proper justice; and to that I leave you. I tell you again, I will not fight you."

"And do you," said Don Ferdinand, "a base-born menial,

set up the gentleman over me, a noble of Spain? Who was your father, pray, and who your mother? Tell me, that I may write their names in my tablets, and show them to the Lady Viola. Not fight, ha! ha! You will flee, then! The Lady Viola is the prize between us!"

Thus saying, he rushed madly on the American. Stung by his words, and compelled to act in self-defense, Warwick no longer hesitated; but exclaiming in his turn, "Viola! I will at least save her from the toils of a villain!" he disposed himself to the combat.

The parties were pretty equally matched. Both were skilled to cut, thrust, and parry, and as light of foot as the mountain cat. The Spaniard had the advantage of years and training with his weapon; but this was perhaps counterbalanced by the superior coolness and strength of the American: and thus, when but for a brief space the solitude of the shore had been broken by the clang of steel, and Warwick remained untouched, the doublet of his adversary showed a spot of blood.

"Hell and its furies!" exclaimed Don Ferdinand. "Am I to be forever baffled, and at last slain by a nameless boor? Ye saints forbid! God, and our holy mother, forfend!"

He redoubled his efforts. His blows and lunges followed each other in rapid succession; while his countenance, so lately pale, was now flushed and swollen, his eyes bloodshot, and every feature distorted by the fierceness of his passion. His furious blows, however, were skillfully received, parried, and returned: and at length, in very exhaustion, he paused. To a respite Warwick did not object: and with their swords still crossed, and eye riveted on eye, step by step, the rivals passed several times completely around each other, as they took their breath.

The more opportunity he had for reflection, the more the American felt disposed to avoid, if possible, a serious termi-

nation to the affray. The Spaniard was, therefore, the first to recommence. Making a pass or two, he seemed to collect himself for some decisive effort, and then raised his weapon aloft, as though with one tremendous, final blow, to cleave his opponent to the dust. The movement was but a feint. The polished steel flashed in the sun; but suddenly withdrawing it, with the speed of light, he aimed an impetuous thrust, full at the heart of his antagonist. But the cunning weapon found Warwick prepared. With a powerful circling side-stroke, he not only turned the threatening point from his breast, but wrenched the instrument completely from the Spaniard's grasp; and it fell quivering, at the distance of several paces on the ground. Don Ferdinand found himself disarmed, and with the sword of his adversary at his throat. There was a brief pause, during which his features changed to a look of beseeching terror, while his limbs shook with affright.

"Cowardly miscreant!" said Warwick, contemptuously. "A man who dallies so freely with the lives of others, methinks, should possess some little nerve himself. Twice have I nearly fallen by your treachery—once by the hand of your hired assassin, and again this day by your own. Twice ere this have I saved your worthless life. The first time we met I dragged you senseless from the sea. Again, though unknown to you, I rescued you from the tortures of the savages. Twice more this day I give you back your life when it is forfeit. I will not kill so miserable a wretch. Go, and repent: but have a care that you cross not my path again. If you do, as God is my witness, I will not spare you. Begone! I say, begone!"

Don Ferdinand made no reply, but slowly retreated backward, as though afraid to trust the words of his generous rival. He had proceeded in this manner but a few paces, when his face suddenly brightened, and his whole aspect changed, as

he discovered a couple of his servants approaching; and at the top of his voice he cried out:

"Help! ho—help! help!"

Warwick at first supposed that the Spaniard must have received some more serious injury in the affray than was apparent; and started forward with the view of aiding him. But he was immediately undeceived. Casting his eye to the right he discovered the veritable Ambrose, who had beset him in New York, and another of the chevalier's unscrupulous menials, weapon in hand, advancing at a quick pace; and he perceived at once that his desperate enemy, whom no act of magnanimity could touch, proposed still a closing scene to the drama.

He was well aware that there was no time for delay, and he made none. Quickly returning his sword to its scabbard, he grappled his pistols, and deliberately presenting one at Don Ferdinand, fired. The Spaniard gave a shriek and fell. Turning toward his new assailants, he presented the other; and the three fired nearly together, but without effect. Dropping his useless pistols, the American now advanced with his sword; and perceived as he did so, that before he could bring the enemy to close quarters, he should have to stand another fire. He moved rapidly, in part with the purpose of distracting their aim; the two rascals had already elevated their weapons; but ere they were discharged, the young Indian, Alwyn, rushed in between the combatants. Close in his rear followed the athletic Michael Johnson, who, swinging his rifle with his brawny arm, as though it had been a toy, brought the belligerents to a stand.

"How now, boys!" cried the old man. "Warwick! Ambrose! what's the meaning of all this?"

"Our master is slain," returned Ambrose, pointing to the spot where Don Ferdinand lay writhing on the ground.

"Go to his assistance," said Johnson. "You won't aid him

any in his journey to the other world by killin' another to bear him company;" and turning to Warwick, he continued: "this is unfortunate, boy. How did it happen? but there is no time for explanations now, while blood is flowin'."

Thus saying he proceeded himself to render such aid to the wounded man as the nature of the case would permit. Warwick, meanwhile, remained leaning on his sword in a painful state of anxiety.

"Alwyn," said he, "I much regret that I did not allow you to accompany me this morning as you requested. A witness to all that has transpired would just at present be a great relief to my feelings."

"My arm also might have done you some good," returned the youth.

"All that is very well as it is," rejoined Warwick. "I have escaped, as it were by a miracle, unhurt. You came at the time of my greatest need, when I was little looking for succor, and did me good service. But how happened you here at all? How came Michael Johnson here just at the important moment, when another instant would have probably terminated my career forever? Alwyn, the Great Spirit watches over us for good."

"Soon after you left the camp," replied the Indian, "Don Ferdinand also left, followed by his two knaves. Their eyes looked bloody, and I was afraid."

"Ha! judge you so shrewdly?" interrupted Warwick.

"Their own faces judged them," returned the youth. "Not knowing what to do, I went to good Michael. He said we had better follow on and see fair play; and so we came."

Don Ferdinand was found to be severely, but Johnson was of the opinion not mortally, wounded. The old man, with a skill which the necessities of his wandering life had imparted, soon succeeded in staunching the flow of blood; and having

dispatched Alwyn to the camp for more help, he and the two servants soon constructed a rude litter of limbs bound together with bark, on which the chevalier was carefully placed; and muttering curses as he went, the miserable man was slowly borne up the hill toward the encampment.

Chapter Thirty-two.

A GHOSTLY BRIDEGROOM. TUMULT IN THE CAMP.

"To be furious,
Is to be frightened out of fear."

CHARLES WARWICK proceeded to the camp in advance; and at once seeking Don Manuel, related to him the occurrences of the morning, with their frightful termination. The blame so evidently rested with the assailant and victim, that Don Manuel, while he deeply regretted the melancholy catastrophe, frankly declared he could see nothing to censure in the part acted by the American. He showed him into his own quarters, and himself proceeded out to meet Don Ferdinand.

The servants of that individual, meanwhile, under the direction of Johnson, were slowly bearing him up the narrow and winding footpath which led to the fortress. The face of the chevalier was no longer flushed, but had changed to a deathly sallow hue, and was covered with large drops of clammy perspiration. His voice was faint and languid, and he suffered much from pain; yet the threatening finger of death seemed quite insufficient to tame his fiery passions. His eyes gleamed with the fury of disappointed revenge; and denunciations, not only of his rival, but of all those around him, formed the burden of the broken sentences which his weak state permitted him to utter. As Don Manuel met him with still additional aid to assist in bearing him on, he covered him also with reproaches; and thus he continued to rave, sometimes at one,

and sometimes at another, until the fortress was gained, and he was submitted into the hands of the surgeon.

Doctor Oquetos found the sword cuts of little consequence; he shook his head, however, at the aspect of the pistol wound, and declared that the ball had been very injudiciously directed. The shot, indeed, was of an alarming nature, the bullet having entered the right side, where it was still lodged; and the loss of blood also having been considerable. On examination, however, it was found that both the distance and his own position had been much in the Spaniard's favor. The ball was extracted with some trouble, but for the present it did not positively appear that any important organ was injured. The dressings were applied; and worn out with varying excitements, and loss of the vital tide, the chevalier sunk into repose. Don Manuel, the physician, and the priest remained beside him during some hours of tolerably quiet rest, in the course of which the Lady Viola, more than once, kindly came in person to inquire after his condition and prospects.

He awoke sore and stiff, but with the vital powers refreshed. He first inspired his breath deeply, and then hallooed to ascertain the strength and soundness of his lungs. Satisfied by the experiment that the main organs of life were untouched, he indulged in a smile of scorn. He laughed outright; and as he hastily reflected and matured his plans, an expression of malicious triumph took possession of his features. He requested to be left alone with Don Manuel; and abruptly demanded of him, immovable as he lay on his couch, the immediate solemnization of his nuptials with the Lady Viola.

When Don Manuel had recovered from his surprise, he represented to the chevalier that he was in no condition to go through with a ceremony of that nature; that with his present prospects, however probable his ultimate recovery might be deemed, it would far better become him to call on Father Antonio to administer ghostly comfort, and to shrive his soul,

than to feast his fancy with the illusory pleasures and ambitions of the world.

But Don Ferdinand was not thus to be put off. He had evidently determined on the present denouement of the one great plot and object of his life. He reminded Don Manuel of the sacred original contract entered into by himself and the older Cassino, which could not be broken; to its repeated recognition and renewal since; to the many sacrifices he himself had made to obtain its fulfillment; to the unexampled patience with which he had awaited the lady's pleasure; and to the conduct of Don Manuel in putting him off day by day, and month after month, with puerile excuses, and without just cause.

Finding that these representations failed to convince Don Manuel, the chevalier threw off what little of the mask remained; and with all the bitter recklessness of his nature, drove the nail directly to the quick. He recurred to certain sums of money advanced to him at the time of his flight from Mexico; and reminded him that not only he and his daughter, but his whole household, were even then, day by day, subsisting on his bounty.

Don Manuel was stung to the soul.

"O my God!" he exclaimed. "What shall I say, and whither shall I fly?"

He wrung his hands, and strode across the room in the agony of his wounded feelings. Don Ferdinand seemed to be moved.

"Forgive me," he said; "and find an apology for my language in the cruel hardships of my situation. I have left home, and country, and wealth, and power, for your sake and that of your daughter, my affianced wife; and here am I now, after years of unrewarded devotion, prostrate, and nearly slain by the hand of a rival; who, wherever we go, follows on our track like a bloodhound; like a very savage of these wilds,

among whom he had his origin, and of whose blood, in truth, it is asserted he is; intent on stealing from me the affections of my bride. And furthermore, Don Manuel, I will plainly add, that you yourself, singular as it may appear, seem to hold out encouragements to that rival; and it is whispered, indeed, that you are covertly leagued with him to blast my hopes, to fool, and to dishonor me."

Don Manuel did not reply, and the chevalier continued:

"If it be not so, why keep this American about you? Why daily honor him above all others, with marked attentions and flattering conversations? And why should the Lady Viola hang on his every word and smile, with such sickening fondness, delighting in none other voice or look, forgetting her betrothal and the presence of her lord?"

"Don Ferdinand de Cassino," returned Don Manuel, in a grave and impressive tone, by this time having measurably recovered his composure, "I do not forget my obligations to you; would to God that I could; or rather that I might cancel them, by repaying you all you have forced upon me. I believe I shall do so yet. But for this one day, let the subject, and all other exciting topics, be adjourned. I can not but tremble at the consequences to yourself, should this conversation be continued."

"Fear not," said the chevalier. "I feel strong. The assassin failed in his purpose. I shall live to take my revenge of him. Say that you will at once dismiss him, or that you have done so already: but wherever he may hide, I will, at some future period, unkennel him. Dog of an Englishman, or American, or Indian, as the case may be, Cassino will repay him yet. Where is he now?"

"Captain Warwick is still in the camp," replied Don Manuel.

"Send him away instantly!" said Don Ferdinand, imperiously.

"Dismiss all those questions for to-day, I beseech you," returned Don Manuel.

"Send him off! send him off!" continued the chevalier, raising his voice. "I offer it as a compromise. This day, this hour, send him away, or give me Viola. I will have one or the other: and I will not any longer be trifled with."

"Captain Charles Warwick," said Don Manuel, deliberately, "shall never again be treated by me with disrespect. If I am indebted to you, Don Ferdinand, for gold, we are all indebted to him for our lives: and while I have food or shelter, he shall be welcome. He will go or stay, as he likes."

"Don Manuel!" cried the chevalier, greatly excited, "I tell you again I am not to be braved. I am a desperate man; and you have made me so. I warn you in season: the consequences be on your own head!"

For a moment Don Manuel's eyes flashed with indignation. Checking himself, however, he said:

"Your situation, young man, must furnish an apology for your language. For the present I leave you, with the hope that quiet and reflection will benefit both your body and your mind. To-morrow, perhaps—"

"To-morrow!" echoed Don Ferdinand, raising himself on his couch. "You would blind me while you consummate your plans. I am strong to-day!" and again he made the cabin ring with his halloo!

But the effort was too much. The blood started afresh from his side, and he sunk back on his bed in a swoon. Doctor Oquetos was recalled; and by the time his skill had succeeded in restoring a partial animation, Don Manuel was hastily summoned without. The whole fortress was in commotion. Don Ferdinand's immediate followers were threatening a mutiny: and while the Spaniard was addressing some hurried inquiries to Johnson, cries of revenge for their lord, and death to his murderer, already saluted his ears. He at

once ordered a call to be beat, and the men, accustomed to obedience, slowly and sullenly came together.

Near one half of the forces were the immediate retainers of Don Ferdinand de Cassino. Of these, some, like our acquaintance Ambrose, had been his vassals, or those of his father, from birth. On his soil they first saw the light; and had always subsisted from his hand. They came to him as a part of his patrimonial estates: and the fealty they acknowledged was that of the serfs of the middle ages. Ignorant and unscrupulous, his will to them was law. To revere him and to serve him, to fight for him, or to revenge him, furnished them, perhaps, with the loftiest subjects of emulation which the circumstances of their lives permitted. Besides, it was well known to every member of the camp that Don Manuel was a fallen man: and by some means it was equally well understood, that on Don Ferdinand were the pay and rations of all depending. It therefore needed, in the present aspect of affairs, nothing more than an active tongue, and that Ambrose possessed, to stir up a tumult in the camp.

Don Manuel was glad to see that there was nothing like hesitation or doubt on the part of his own followers. He had expected as much; but the confirmation of the fact cheered him in the midst of his perplexities. He cast his eyes over the assembled body of men with renewed courage, and addressed them with confidence. He informed them that Don Ferdinand, if he could be kept quiet, was in no immediate danger: that with proper care his speedy recovery was to be anticipated as certain. He alluded to the affray in which the chevalier had been wounded, with regret. It had originated, however, in a private matter, with which they had nothing to do. They all knew, or ought to know, that Captain Warwick was as honorable as he was brave: and there was no reason whatever to suppose that any improper advantage had been taken of their master. But he reserved it wholly to himself

to inquire into the circumstances, and to pass judgment: and pledged himself that impartial justice should be done.

With this assurance he dismissed them to their several quarters; promising them, at the same time, condign punishment, as the reward of any further mutinous behavior. The men slowly but peaceably dispersed.

Chapter Thirty-three.

A PARTING. TO THE WOODS AGAIN.

"I leave the light of eyes and light of love,
For night, and stars, and mountain solitudes."

WARWICK, meanwhile, remained in Don Manuel's quarters. The Lady Viola had heard from his lips the details of the morning's rencounter; and also of his determination, which that affair had hastened, to quit the Spanish camp. She listened to the account he gave of the affray, with visible agitation; but when he spoke of his departure, she turned white as chiseled marble. She essayed to speak, but failing in the attempt, abruptly left the room.

Uncertain as to the exact impression which a knowledge of the catastrophe had made on the Lady Viola; uncertain whether he should see her again, to bid her adieu, or, indeed, whether it were wise to attempt it, he awaited impatiently the return of Don Manuel; but the Spaniard came not: yet in his place appeared one equally welcome. It was Michael Johnson, who, with his frank and sympathizing voice and face, invited and received his fullest confidence. He unburdened his perplexed heart to him, and was glad to know that his conduct in the past, and his plans for the future, though fraught with considerable personal danger to himself, met with the old man's approbation. The cheering words of the veteran gave him renewed confidence and courage. He bade him trust in God when man and nature should fail him, in the lonely forest, surrounded by hostile savages, as in the camp; and told him

still to hope, even in his love. With the inspiring voice of a prophet he assured him that the Lady Viola and Don Ferdinand would never be united, and that the final crisis of that affair was not distant.

The conversation was interrupted by the disturbance without, already noticed; and Warwick perceived, with a deep feeling of regret, that his name was coupled with the turbulent movement. He was now more than ever convinced of the propriety of his decision. He could not remain a guest where he had become a source of discord and violence; and though well aware that of right he might claim the protection of Don Manuel to the last extremity, and that manifold perils, and perhaps destruction, awaited his path thence, in whatever direction he might go, still he did not hesitate. He would become a sacrifice himself, if necessary, but he would not accept any such fatal offering at the hands of others.

Order having at length been restored in the encampment, Don Manuel entered his quarters, and Warwick lost no time in announcing to him his determination. Contrary to his hopes, and almost to his expectations, the declaration was received by the Spaniard with evident disappointment and chagrin.

"I can not listen to the proposition," said he. "My feelings, my honor, are at stake in this question. The sentiments I entertain toward you, and the debt of gratitude common to us all, by no means excepting Don Ferdinand, alike forbid it. It shall be my business to maintain the peace of my establishment; and if hot heads like the chevalier choose to pick unseemly quarrels, they must take the consequences."

Finding the attempt vain to remove the Spaniard's scruples, Warwick ceased to argue the point. He knew that Don Manuel possessed the affections of the camp, but he also knew that Ferdinand had a sufficient number devoted to his interests for purposes of mischief; and if a collision between the two

chiefs (which he thought he foresaw) must come, he perceived no good reason for hastening it, or for himself becoming the hinge on which it should turn. And now, could he only unbosom his soul to the Lady Viola—could he, indeed, but bid her that affectionate adieu which an intimate friendship even would dictate and sanction, he felt that sustained still by a latent hope, a trust in the omnipotency of justice and of love, he could depart in peace. But governed, as he desired every act of his life should be, by a strict rule of right, he was uncertain as to the course he ought to pursue. Satisfied that the feelings of both father and daughter were with him instead of his rival, and that, could he only sunder the bonds which bound them to the chevalier, they would bless him, he was still anxious to spare Viola, and doubtful of himself, and doubtful of the extent to which he might go with propriety and honor.

The shades of darkness were just embrowning the atmosphere, rendering objects shadowy and indistinct, and Warwick stood in the open air, in the little unoccupied space connected with the quarters of Don Manuel. An indifferent observer might have supposed that he was merely enjoying the bland air of the evening; one acquainted with his determination might have deemed that he was regarding the dying day as a thing he might never behold again, and taking a last look at tent and fortress-wall as objects which, the sense of security they imparted, had imbued with unusual charms. But though his eye wandered over the different points of the works and the landscape, turned upon the heavens, and rested on the white face of the moon, riding aloft calm and cold as a spheroid of ice, his mind was occupied with a very different subject. There was room in it but for one thought, and that was Viola; and his soul was breathing forth those sentiments to the spirits of the air, and to them whispering those passionate adieus which he dared not utter in her presence. Suddenly, without

a sound, but with a dim consciousness on his part of her approach, Viola stood beside him. In the uncertain light he yet knew that she was ghastly pale, and that her eyes were swollen and red with weeping.

"Sir Warwick," said she, in that peculiar, low, calm tone which betokens the agitation it is intended to hide, "are you still of the mind to leave us?"

"Such is my intent, lady," replied Warwick.

"You once said to me," continued the Lady Viola, "that your familiarity with these forests and their wild inhabitants rendered you comparatively safe among them. I fear it is no longer so, since you can not have failed to arouse the hostility of the natives by your defense of us. Indeed, Alwyn has informed me that were they to get you in their power, nothing would save you from their vengeance."

"It is my intention and my hope," returned Warwick, "to avoid them. With the knowledge I possess of the country and their habits, I feel a strong certainty that I shall be able to do so; if not, I have yet, I think, some friends among them."

"If you must meet this danger," said Viola, "if it can not be avoided, we can only rest the event with Heaven; and it will well become those whom you have so deeply served to pray fervently for your safety. The house of Don Manuel Torrillo, Sir Warwick, owe you that which they can never repay; and however feebly we may manifest our gratitude, I trust you will do us the justice to believe that in our hearts we give proper place to those sentiments which words at best are but slow to express—that we look on our American friend as one to whom God has given great nobility of soul, as one whose kindness never tires, and whose courage and blood purchased the safety of strangers whom it were far better for him that he had never known. Your connection with our ill-starred fortunes, Sir Warwick, has brought you nothing but indignity and stripes. Oh, if you could reach your friends

again in New York in safety, it were better, far better, that you go, and leave us here to our fate."

"Dear lady," returned Warwick, "were I not assured by the unfortunate occurrences of this day that I could no longer be of service to you; that my farther presence, instead of contributing to your security, would only endanger it, no considerations would induce me to leave you. I go for your sakes, as well as my own."

"Sir Warwick, you say well. It is needless to attempt to gloss over the matter; it is vain to endeavor to cover it with a vail. You have shed your blood for us; for us you have made sacrifices without number or stint; and now, when, as it seems, we may need you no longer, we in effect bid you begone, and turn you out alone to brave those terrible dangers from which we have so narrowly and mercifully escaped. O that you but knew the cruel destiny that binds us! O that you might read and understand our hearts!"

"Viola, dear Viola! You distress yourself unnecessarily. Circumstances entirely beyond the control of your father or yourself have rendered it improper, or at least unwise, for me longer to remain your guest. Therefore, I go. But grieve not, and fear not, dear madam. The great God is over us all, to protect us. I tear myself from you; and the expectation that you may be benefited is my only consolation for the sacrifice; and to this, Viola, may I add the hope, that when away I shall not be forgotten?"

"You may! you may!" quickly returned the distressed and agitated girl.

"Would, Viola, that I might say more. Within the hour I go, and may never see you again. Must I depart without one word on the great subject of my thoughts—a subject which I am powerless to dismiss, which is wedded to my being as a part of itself, and must ever thus remain? Would to God that this bosom were laid open that you might know its feelings!

And why may they not be spoken? There is, in truth, nothing natural or divine to forbid it. Viola! I love you; ardently, fondly, truly! I would clasp you to my heart, and cherish you there forever!"

Sudden and impassioned as was this declaration, it proved too much for the delicate nerves of the Lady Viola, already strained to their utmost tension. Her head drooped, her breathing was interrupted, she tottered, and would have fallen at the feet of her lover, had he not supported her. For a moment she was circled in his arms, and her head lay passively upon his breast.

"Viola! dear Viola!" said Warwick, in alarm. "Have I frightened you? Forgive me! I would not shock you, I would not agitate your feelings: but this moment, perhaps, is the very pivot of my life. I ask no avowal of any kind from you. I shall continue to watch over you as the mother over her child: I must continue to love you, for I find myself powerless to dismiss you from my heart: and I shall look to the great unknown future and its changes, dear Viola; and not without hope."

"Oh, this is too much, Charles," said the Lady Viola, faintly, releasing herself from his support; "you should have spared me this. Know you not, indeed, that I am the betrothed of another? But go, now: I forgive you. After this, it is doubtless better that we should part."

"And can you, Viola, add your forgiveness for all the unfortunate events of this day?"

"I do—I do."

"And have you no memento that I can look upon when cold and interminable leagues divide us?"

"I had brought this ring, Charles; but I know not now if a gift would be proper from me. Yes, it shall be yours: it was my mother's, and surely may be given to him who saved the life of her child."

Warwick took the little hand which presented the offering in his, and pressed it passionately to his lips. Without another word, but with one wild, prolonged, and despairing look, the lovers separated.

It was now fully dark. The American found Alwyn and Michael Johnson awaiting him at the gate of the fortress; and the three passed out in silence. Alwyn was to be his companion; and Johnson, loth to part from one who had wound himself so deeply into his affections, accompanied them for some distance down the mountain. Finally they sat down in the desolate but beautiful wood, beautiful even in the gloom of night, and there prolonged their adieus for an hour or more; during which the past and the future were freely and narrowly canvassed. At last the old man arose. He felt that the flying hours might be important to his young friend. Warwick sent a kind message of farewell to Don Manuel; and left it to Johnson to mollify his feelings and convince him of the propriety of the step he had taken. The old man wrung his hand convulsively at parting.

"God bless you, my boy!" said he. "The Lord God Jehovah bless, and keep you from harm in the wilderness! Be watchful and prudent, and a brighter day will come; for it is not in nater that night should last always. Farewell, my boy, farewell!"

Warwick and his young Indian attendant slowly and disconsolately, but yet not wholly comfortless, kept on down the mountain, while the veteran Johnson returned to the camp.

Chapter Thirty-four.

THE FADING LILY. THE ISLAND AND ITS SYLVAN HAUNTS.

"Friendships that now in death are hushed,
And young affections broken chain,
And hopes that fate too quickly crushed,
In memory live again."

SEVERAL days passed in comparative quiet at the Spanish quarters. Don Manuel, who was greatly disturbed at the abrupt departure of Charles Warwick, had, in a good degree, recovered his equanimity; while the chevalier Cassino, soothed by the event which had distressed his colleague, professed a laudable submission to the fates, and was rapidly recovering from his wounds. The indications at the mine were full of encouragement; the few Indians who presented themselves seemed friendly and well disposed, and kept the camp pretty well supplied with corn and vegetables; game was abundant; and, in short, every thing about the fortress, on the mountain, and in the valleys beyond, wore an aspect of security and peace; and with the American, every element of discord seemed to have departed. The Lady Viola alone appeared an exception to the general cheerfulness. But patient and retiring by nature, her disquietude manifested itself more in the increased pallor of her complexion, and the loss of elasticity in her step, than in her words or actions. She was still kind and gentle as before, and strove hard, especially when in her father's presence, for that life and buoyancy of spirits which had fled away, she knew not whither, and would not come back at her call.

Don Manuel noted with pain the daily change in his child; and strove to occupy her mind and to amuse her by the contrivance of every little pleasure which their isolated situation would permit. Formerly he would have considered her malady the effect of hardships, or of the exchange of the mellow airs of her father-land for the rougher breezes of the north: but the experience of the last few months had opened to him several new and important chapters in the history of the female heart. He watched his fading flower day by day; and as he perceived, in spite of all her efforts, a settled gloom gathering on her features, or as some unwilling glance of her eye exposed to him the fearful forebodings which lay heavy at her heart, he referred her ailment to the proper source—to disgust of life at the prospect of a union with Don Ferdinand de Cassino; and regrets, though she might not own them even to herself, for one no longer present.

The chivalrous Ruby O'Brady, with a woman's quickness, also understood the nature of the pangs which were rending the breast of her mistress; and did every thing possible in her simple way to soothe and encourage her. In her anxious endeavor, she even ventured to allude to the subject of her mistress' disquiet, in the forlorn expectation that she might be able to revive the wick of hope, which she perceived flickering and about to expire. But the favorite attendant was disappointed. The delicate question was forbidden; and Ruby found herself obliged to rely on indirect efforts to accomplish her benevolent purposes.

Shut out from the ordinary occupations and pleasures of life, there was still much in the wild scenery which surrounded the fortress to interest a mind capable of appreciating the beauty and grandeur of nature. These yet, while other sources of enjoyment had faded, retained their hold on the Lady Viola: and a ramble on the mountain, or in the vales below, was among the most successful of the expedients devised to

withdraw her from herself. The songs of the birds, and the gambols of the deer, which, in this primitive region, were fearlessly performed in her path; the gathering of wild flowers, and the climbing of the rocks where the sweetest ones grew; the listening to the music of a waterfall in some glen; or a stroll along the embowered banks of the Susquehanna, served, at least for the hour, to dim the recollection of the sorrows which they could not heal. The little island, already mentioned, lying so dreamily on the bosom of the river, with its gentle sloping shores and quiet shades, which looked like proper haunts for the naiads and the fauns, had often attracted her attention. Don Manuel had it explored; and the report being favorable, an expedition was determined to its shadowy retreats.

Don Ferdinand, though still feeble, was able to make one of the party. On reaching the Susquehanna, it was found that the slight float and poles already prepared were amply sufficient to convey them in safety across the narrow channel which intervened between the mainland and the islet. As they landed on its pebbly beach, and the fairy prospect burst upon their view, a glow of pleasure diffused itself through the dullest breast; and each disposed himself for the enjoyment of the hour. Michael Johnson and Hugh O'Brady secured the craft on which depended their return; while Solyman, hale of his wounds, and proud that they had been gained in the defense of his mistress, exhibited a series of little gallantries addressed to his compatriot on that memorable occasion, the maiden Ruby. Doctor Oquetos and Father Antonio, without loss of time, struck off into their accustomed field; and were soon at profound loggerheads on some question of science connected with the island, and wandering alone, without regard to the rest, they knew not whither.

"This is indeed a lovely spot," said the Lady Viola, gazing around with a momentary rapture as they gained the height

of the bank. "Here, methinks, could the weary of life find rest, as in the paradise of old."

The island contained perhaps some fifty acres of rich alluvial; and the profuse vegetation which it produced was of the most verdant hue; and varied in kind by the thousand different seeds and roots, which the floods in successive ages had deposited on its shores. The trees were few in number, but majestic in size. In form and appearance they were quite different from their spear-like fellows of the forest. Each massive trunk supported a wide wilderness of its own, with horizontal branches, often of the size of goodly trees themselves. There stood a venerable sycamore, stretching aloft its bare white arms, as though deprecating the winds and the lightnings; by its side grew the humble thorn; and a little way beyond was a delicious grove of alder, hazel, and sweet birch. There a wide-spread weeping-willow, with graceful curves, bowed its plenteous foliage almost to the ground, and waved its thread-like boughs to the stirring of the gentlest breeze. Again, a towering elm stretched proudly to the sky; and pendent from its top hung a vine, which for many years, with the patient instinct of its nature, had been occupied in climbing up the toilsome ascent; but at length, the desired altitude having been attained, and its tendrils and stalks firmly clasped to the topmost branches of its gallant support, it had scorned and thrown off its lower holds, and now hung free to the root, creaking as it swayed to and fro.

"Yes, truly this is a beautiful spot," said Don Manuel, in reply to the observation of his daughter. "Not only might the anchorite here find a fitting retreat, but the man of the world could hardly fail to be fascinated by this happy isle, and charmed into a love of solitude and nature. But see those clusters of the wild grape, Viola, and those plums. When they ripen I will have them gathered and added to our stores,

and so cheat the birds of a repast which, perhaps, they have enjoyed undisturbed for centuries."

"Oh, what a tiny, beautiful deer!" exclaimed the Lady Viola, pointing a little way off to a hillock where a fawn was grazing.

"It seems to be alone," said Johnson. "Perhaps I can catch it; shall I try, lady?"

"If you please, good Michael," returned Viola; "but do not hurt it."

The conversation ceased, in order to witness the result of the experiment which the old hunter proposed; while he, accustomed to the habits of the animal and the wiles of the hunt, accomplished his purpose before they were hardly aware he had commenced. Concealing himself in some bushes near by, he imitated the call of its dam, when the little animal with a bound threw itself almost into his arms. Securing it tenderly with a handkerchief, he placed it a moment after, its eyes tearful and its heart throbbing as though ready to burst from its breast, at the Lady Viola's feet.

She admired the graceful form and taper ears of her sensitive captive, and passing her hand fondly over its smooth and variegated skin, attempted to sooth it with kind words and gentle endearments.

"I would gladly make a pet of you, my pretty prisoner," said she, "were you not so fearful. But as it is, Michael, I think we shall have to give it its freedom again."

"As you please, lady," returned the veteran; "but under your kind care it would soon forget its fears, and would show an affection in its little nater which might shame many a wiser creater. It seems to have lost its mother, which most likely has been shot by some of our thoughtless sodger boys to furnish food for the camp, and probably would be better off with you than to be left alone, so young, to shift for itself."

The animal was accordingly given into the hands of Solyman to conduct to the camp.

Chapter Thirty-five.

THE MYSTERY AND BEAUTY OF LOGICAL ARGUMENTATION. A SURPRISE.

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"

HAVING rambled over a large part of the island with much satisfaction and delight, on turning a little thicket the ears of the party were suddenly saluted with a loud jargon of words; and on approaching the spot whence the sounds proceeded, they discovered Doctor Oquetos and Father Antonio sitting on the grass, and tilting at each other more lustily than ever, in the bloodless but never-ending tourney of argumentation. The excitement between the veteran gladiators was so great that all felt curious to ascertain the nature of the important questions which had produced it, and became interested listeners.

"I must maintain," said Doctor Oquetos, taking occasion of so large an increase of auditors to reiterate his point, "that these globular vegetable substances which I hold in my hand are veritable peas; yes, culinary peas; and cultivation, reverend sir, would soon demonstrate the identity."

"I can not admit the correctness of your position," returned Father Antonio. "As I observed before, these vegetables are bitter and unpalatable; and it were insulting nature and the Creator to suppose that an article of nutrition so important to the human and lower animal economy as peas came from the Divine hand in such a crude and imperfect condition."

"Cultivation! cultivation!" shouted the unyielding doctor, "would soon bring them to their beautiful proportions, their

proper size and flavor. Man's labor is intended to perfect what nature doth but begin. Think ye, that when man, having fallen from his primeval state, in which the earth yielded him spontaneously whatever was necessary for the supply of his physical wants, was condemned to live by the sweat of his brow, that there was nothing provided for him to do?"

"Well—peas!" said the divine.

"Peas!" reiterated the doctor. "All esculent roots, and grains, and fruits were conferred by an all-wise Providence on the world in such a state as to compel obedience to the commandment. Man must toil before he can enjoy them. They must have the plow, the hoe, the pruning-knife; and the application of manures which, by chemical processes known to the subtile alchemy of nature, work potently but unseen; in short, the sweat of man, like the dews of heaven, must fall upon them before they are fitted to his wants. And thus we find here in the wildernesses of America, where civilized man and the arts of culture are unknown, the embryo *pea;* and doubtless were we to search these forests with a careful, scientific scrutiny, we should discover also the embryos of most of our grains and fruits and roots, awaiting the cunning skill of the husbandman to refine, develop, and perfect them."

"Well, well," said Father Antonio, quickly. "I admit in part—*peas*——"

"*Peas!*" screamed Doctor Oquetos, raising his shrill voice to such a pitch as effectually to put down his plethoric and somewhat exhausted opponent, and at the same time appealing to his listeners by a gesture and a most bland glance of satisfaction. "As to the other point, diluvian or not? that is the question. Was this island on which we now stand, or was it not, formed at the time of the general deluge? I affirm it was. The reverend father maintains the contrary. The demonstration of the affirmative is easy, the *modus operandi* clear. It will take but a minute—was then and there heaped up!—ebbs

and flows!—large masses of water!—receding of the floods! —*wuh! wuh!*"

The learned gentleman here discovered that he was losing himself, and paused to collect his thoughts and get a little breath. His crest-fallen opponent, however, was in no condition to take advantage of this accident to the battery of his opponent, and the doctor accordingly proceeded:

"In proof of my position, I have already sought out and submitted to our spiritual father these specimens of stone containing marine shells, which, I take it, furnish a very satisfactory proof that the sea has at some time flowed here; unless we choose to suppose the absurdity, not too gross, perhaps, for some minds, that this veritable island has in some unheard-of manner, and at some period of time, been loosed from its eternal foundations, and been made to travel to the ocean, in order to possess itself of these unquestionable saline productions which I now hold in my hand."

The speaker here, with an air of proud triumph, submitted to the inspection of the company several fragments of stone, presenting on their broken surfaces apparent impressions of shells.

Father Antonio, meanwhile, was making a last dying effort to collect his energies for a reply. But the ground gone over by the doctor, since he had been permitted to respond, was so extensive, that he hesitated, not knowing properly where to begin; and the delay was fatal to his purpose. His expert adversary had no intention of relinquishing the advantage which he flattered himself he had gained in the argument; he therefore took the half-formed words out of the divine's mouth and himself continued:

"Besides, if you please, observe the rounded pebbles that strew the beach so thickly on every side. The motion of the sea could alone have worn them smooth and formed the convexity of their surfaces."

"Would not fresh water produce those effects as well?" inquired the Lady Viola.

The doctor appeared slightly puzzled for a moment; but, like a skillful tactician as he was, cleared the dilemma by a nimble skip to a new point.

"See there!" said he, pointing to a pile of flood-wood which had accumulated in a hollow on the upper portion of the island, and not far from the spot where they were. "The hand of man never placed those many monarchs of the forest in their present bed. They have been torn from their foundations, and thus deposited by the mighty throes of our common mother, nature."

"To what age of the world would you refer the event?" said the Lady Viola.

"Oh! ah, my dear madam," replied the doctor, with a slight hesitation; "unquestionably to the same period of which I have before spoken; to that era which gave form to the surface of our earth, as we now have it. Unfortunately the precise date of the deluge is not quite settled, being still a subject of controversy with our profoundest chronologists."

"But, Doctor Oquetos," said Viola, laughing, "how do you account for the preservation of those trees for such a length of time? Our books and experience teach us that all vegetable matter, when exposed to the action of the weather, to alternate rain and sun, rapidly decays."

The learned doctor did not appear to perceive the full force of the remark; or, if he did, it was no part of his system of tactics to retreat. Accordingly he gallantly pushed ahead.

"You must have noticed, my dear lady," said he, "a peculiar preserving quality in this northern American atmosphere, rendering it a very different thing from the air of Spain. Meats here are readily preserved from putrefaction without packing in salt, as our experience with venison shows. Had

we time, I think I might explain the philosophy of this to your entire satisfaction."

"We will pass that point, then," returned the Lady Viola. "But as to the island, would it not be quite reasonable to suppose that it is the remains of an eminence which has thus far withstood the action of the surrounding water; or that it has been left above the surface of the river by the gradual deepening of the river's bed in the softer earth around it; or, as is still more probable, perhaps, that at the time of some flood—not a Noah's flood—it was cut from one of the banks by the forcing of an additional channel?"

"Perhaps so, perhaps so," replied the doctor, with the air of a man who retreats from a sound position from motives of gallantry. "Such explanations of the great phenomena of nature, however, can hardly be expected to satisfy the scientific mind. That looks higher, deeper, and broader, and can not rest until it holds in its grasp the mysterious arcana of the universe. My profound knowledge of geology, madam, enables me to decide with certainty many questions which for centuries have distracted the entire learned world; and——"

"I wish this senseless jargon might be brought to a close," said Don Ferdinand, pettishly. "Viola has been talking like a university professor, and Doctor Oquetos like a fool, for the last half hour. I am exhausted and sick; and if we are to have any refreshments, I would like them brought forth."

The Lady Viola, who, for the time, seemed equally to have forgotten the presence of Don Ferdinand and her own sad thoughts, was brought back to perfect consciousness by the chevalier's remark. Doctor Oquetos was enraged. He, however, with the help of the good Father Antonio, who, forgetting his own discomfiture in his office of comforter, came to the rescue with words of soothing, succeeded in smothering his chagrin. A spot of grass beneath an umbrageous shade was selected, and the refreshments were spread out on

the ground. Don Manuel, pleased that his daughter had exhibited an interest in the little events of the day, and rejoiced to know that any thing was able to arouse her from the listlessness which had latterly oppressed her, was in excellent spirits; and even Don Ferdinand, as some bottles of choice wine, which still remained of their New York stores, were uncorked, was forced, apparently much against his will, into the semblance of cheerfulness.

"Where can good Michael be?" at length inquired Lady Viola, as the lunch was ended. Ah, yonder he is hard at work. Let us see, father, what he is doing."

The party accordingly proceeded to the spot indicated, and examined with some curiosity the mysterious labors of the old man, the object of which no one of them was able to divine. He had divided, a short distance from the ground, a famous grape-vine, which now hung like a rope cable suspended from the top of a leaning elm. To the end of this he was about fastening a sort of basket made of twigs and bark, which furnished a safe and comfortable seat. When his arrangements were completed, he proceeded to demonstrate practically the uses for which the contrivance was intended. Depositing himself in the wicker basket, he called on O'Brady to aid him in procuring a suitable momentum, and was soon sweeping through the air at a startling rate, performing a vibratory movement like a pendulum for the distance of some fifty or sixty feet. All were delighted at the exhibition of a swing on so grand a scale; and each in turn seated himself in it to share in the novel diversion.

But the Lady Viola, finding the exercise of too rough and startling a nature for her enjoyment, soon relinquished the mammoth toy to the pleasure of the rest; and with her attendant, Ruby, strolled away, to revel in the rich prospects, the bowers and flowers, which the scenery on every side presented. Very shortly they found themselves in the shelter of

a little grove, but had hardly commenced their collection of wild flowers and fragrant herbs, some of them bearing fruit—the lady's slipper, the violet, the thyme, the wintergreen, the sand cherry—when they were startled by a slight noise, and looking up, the young Indian, Alwyn, stood before them. He dropped himself gracefully on one knee; and silently held up to view a ring, once the Lady Viola's, but now or late belonging to Captain Warwick.

"He is dead," said Viola, faintly.

"No, no!" replied the savage, quickly, "well!" and with difficulty so as to be intelligible, he added, "Love to the white bird."

"Pale and trembling, the Lady Viola was obliged to lean on the faithful Ruby for support. She found herself greatly perplexed to interpret clearly the occurrence, and the somewhat disconnected words which Alwyn had uttered. On the contrary, to Ruby the import was clear as day. Warwick was well. He had sent the ring as a token that the messenger came from him, and might be trusted. He was well, and had sent his love, and doubtless would expect some message in return.

The Lady Viola was too much agitated to speak. Her hair in the confusion had escaped from the bands which held it, and her attendant was endeavoring to replace it; while Alwyn, maintaining his respectful posture, gazed on her face with a mingled expression of sympathy and admiration. Seeing her mistress speechless, Ruby inquired:

"Where is your master, Alwyn?"

The Indian pointed away into the deep forest.

"Come when needed," said he, very deliberately, as though he had committed the phrase to memory. "White bird any message?"

Viola answered not. With Ruby's assistance she seated herself on a little mossy knoll, where, burying her face in her

hands, she seemed lost in conflicting emotions. Her attendant was of a different cast of character, and fitted, as has been seen, for prompt action in emergencies. Fearing that Alwyn might be discovered, in the urgency of the moment she whipped out her scissors, and clipping a ringlet from her mistress' flowing tresses, placed it in the hands of the savage.

"We are well," said she. "Tell Captain Warwick that we are all well, and that my mistress has not forgotten him."

Alwyn appeared to take in the import of her words. He received the precious token with the most profound respect, and placing it in his bosom, vanished among the bushes almost as though he had been a shadow.

The Lady Viola, but half conscious of what her maid was doing, for the moment did not chide. Her mind and feelings were in a whirl; but among the wild and tumultuous thoughts of her heart there was assuredly one bright and definite idea. It was the knowledge that Warwick still lived, and was near her. This assurance re-lit the expiring lamp of hope in her breast, which diffused its warming influence through her physical frame; and from that hour her cheek began to glow again, the wreathed smiles to play about her lips, and her eyes to sparkle as she spoke.

The day being pretty well advanced, the party shortly after, with a keen remembrance of the island and its charming haunts, returned to the encampment.

Chapter Thirty-six.

TRADITIONS OF BEND MOUNTAIN. AN EPISODE, ON WHICH HINGES THE FINAL DENOUEMENT OF THE PLOT. JOACHIM BLAZO AND HIS DREAMS.

"*Rom.* I dreamt a dream to-night.
Mer. And so did I.
Rom. Well, what was yours?
Mer. That dreamers often lie.
Rom. In bed, asleep, while they do dream things true."

NOW it came to pass, on a certain night, that the leaders of the Spanish party were suddenly aroused from their slumbers by a great uproar in the camp. On going out to ascertain the cause, they found themselves in a perfect bedlam of disorder and confusion. Some of the men were cursing, some were groaning, and others quaking and speechless with affright, while several were discovered with their garments torn in tatters, and wounded and bleeding.

Don Manuel at first supposed that another mutiny might have broken forth: Johnson and Don Ferdinand were disposed to view the proceeding as a quarrel or riot among the men; but no one could be found to explain the real cause of the disturbance. In reply to the questions asked, one talked incoherently of ghosts, another of demons, and another of conjurors and enchantments. Completely at fault, but satisfied at length that no actual rebellion was intended, Doctor Oquetos was summoned to look after the broken heads and limbs, and the further maintaining of order for the night placed in charge of the prudent Johnson.

On the morrow, a sort of court of investigation was convened, and the affair sifted, with the following result:

The most ignorant man in the fortress, without a doubt, though possessed of some education, which not many of his companions could boast, was an old Spaniard called Joachim Blazo. He, from a certain air of gravity, and the utterance of occasional wise saws, which a pretty retentive memory had enabled him to garner, had been elevated by his admirers into a man of some consequence. There were those who deemed his sayings oracles; and followed after him, and gathered them, as though they were falling manna: and even his contradictions and blunders, on a careful scrutiny, were found by these persons to be made up of spontaneous offshoots of wisdom.

For a long time also, indeed, from the moment the Spaniards set foot on the mysterious mountain and struck shovel in its side, a strange influence had seemed to rest upon them. The mere fact that their leaders, while yet in distant Mexico, had in some manner gained a knowledge of this hill, and afterward had been drawn to it through a long stretch of pathless woods, as by a loadstone, was sufficient to furnish a foundation for their wonder. The feeling was increased by the evidences before them that the mine had been previously wrought: and a thousand wild speculations still added to its intensity. Who were the adventurers that had preceded them, and what had been their fate? Had they realized fortunes on which they retired to live in luxurious ease? Had they utterly failed? or, having succeeded in grasping the glittering treasure, were they finally cut off by the savages, perishing in the midst of wealth which proved powerless to protect them?

The Indians were questioned after their traditionary lore, but with little success. Something, however, was supposed to have been learned from this source, which gave weight to the favorite opinion, that bloodshed and disaster had thus far marked the history of the mountain and the mine. Gradually

a connected tale was woven; and it came to be very generally reported and believed, that others had dug where they were digging, and had succeeded in accumulating great riches; but, falling out among themselves, and quarreling with the natives, they were mostly destroyed: that those who remained alive were insufficient to bear away their treasures, and so buried them in the mine. Thus was the filling up of the assumed excavation accounted for.

Joachim Blazo was the center around which the credulous and wonder-loving delighted to gather; and about these days he took it upon him to dream a dream.

He dreamed that a tall and dignified but swarthy personage, wrapped in a robe of rich furs, and wearing on his head a crown of wampum, dyed feathers, and gold, appeared to him: and after eyeing him intently for some minutes, with a pair of most luminous black orbs, said: that he was the ghost of an ancient Indian King, who had formerly reigned with great power and magnificence in those parts; that on a certain time, while he was yet in the body, a company of pale men, strangers, children of the sun, suddenly made their appearance in his dominions, and took possession of that very mountain, and formed their camp on the identical spot now occupied by Joachim and his companions: that he and his people were alarmed, and suspected that they intended to found an empire of their own; but afterward discovered that their object was to rifle the heart of the hill of its hidden treasures: that these strangers controlled the thunders and the lightnings, so that their dwelling-place on the mountain was often in a blaze, and overhung with a canopy of smoke, while the earth shook with the violence of the concussions; and he dared not interfere with them: that ultimately they fell out with one another, about the division of their spoils; and day and night, for six courses of the sun, fought among themselves, until most of them were slain: that having become thus weakened, he and

his people fell on them by surprise, and made prisoners of the remainder: that not fully understanding the value of the gold, he caused the bars, to an untold amount, to be piled in the depths of the mine, covered them with the dead bodies; and compelled the captives, chained to their own barrows, to bury their companions; and afterward to fill up the entire excavation: that two years of constant labor were devoted to this purpose; when the prisoners were suffered to depart: that finally, in the fullness of time, he himself died, being old and well stricken in years; and now, for many moons and many winters and summers, his soul had been alternately suffering the pains of purgatory, and wandering on the earth; awaiting the appearance thereon of one Joachim Blazo, a just man; who, it was decreed in the records of fate, should restore to the world the treasures he had ignorantly buried; and give to the bones lying therewith, the rights of Christian sepulture; when his perturbed spirit would be at rest.

The dead King did not seem to have finished his relation; but Joachim here became so much elated at the prospect of sudden wealth, that he awoke: and of course, through or not, the shade was compelled by the accident to cease his revelations, and take his departure. Old Blazo rubbed his eyes and looked about him; but it was intently dark in his tent, so that in case the apparition still remained, he had no chance whatever of seeing him. He was of a mind to arise and light a torch, but luckily bethought himself in season that the inhabitants of the other world are not reputed to be particularly partial to fire: so, after a little reflection, he came to the wise conclusion to compose himself again to rest, and let the spirit of the Indian King deal with him in his own way.

But he courted the poppy-god in vain. Sleep fled from his eyes and slumber from his eyelids; and the more he wooed the drowsy snorer, the more he could not find him. The flanks of his imagination had been touched by a spur, which

set it cantering quite beyond his control; and in spite of himself, visions of grandeur and display for his latter days floated in brilliant perspective before him; fully bent, in defiance of consequences, on keeping him awake. More than once he pictured out minutely before the eyes of his fancy his future palace, his train of servants, and his equipage: and diving into the bowels of the hill, with a yard-stick in his hand, and great gusto and deliberation, he took the dimensions of the mass of yellow ingots, as though it had been cord-wood.

But it was indeed an unlucky slip, a very unfortunate omission, that the precise spot where this immense amount of treasure lay had not been designated. As things now stood, he might dig a month, nay, for that matter, all his lifetime, without at last being able to discover it. He blamed his own precipitancy, and cursed that spirit of vanity which had puffed him so full as to awake him just at the critical moment, when the important knowledge, to all appearance, was about to have been committed to his charge. Next, in a fit of desperation, he fell to finding fault with the dead King. Had he, like a decent ghost, instead of spinning him a long yarn about his own performances both in the body and out, just come to the point at once—had he but begun at the other end of his story, and introducing him to the place, the particular locality in the mine, pointed, even with the little end of his little finger, and said:

"Sir Joachim, thou pure man, beneath that stone (or log or spot of earth, as the case might be) lieth an immense pile of golden treasure. Give Christian burial to the bones that molder there, and the whole is yours."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Joachim, "that would have done the business, and his ghostship might have finished his story at some other time."

But ghosts, like other folks, are sometimes fond of having their own way; and as it was already growing light from the

proximity of day, old Blazo gave up the idea of further revelations for that time, and comforted himself with the thought that no well-informed and sensible spirit would suffer himself to be balked of his purpose by so small a matter as a mortal's awaking from sleep a moment too soon.

During the succeeding day Joachim was a very different man from what he had ever been before. He worked but little, appeared absent and thoughtful, and kept himself aloof from his companions, who wondered much thereat; and it was noticed that the bending down to the shovel or the barrow seemed to give him pain. His fellows judged he must be troubled with a crick in his back, so kindly performed his labor for him, and inquired after his ailment. But he, like a prudent man, kept silent; or, if he spoke at all, it was in parables, which, for the once, they could not read, and high-sounding words which came nigh to displease them. By-and-by, as it was seen that he went out one side, and seemed to be practicing the airs and attitudes of a gentlemen, some there were who feared he was becoming demented, and sorrowed on his account.

But Joachim Blazo, had he known it, would have scorned their compassion. Impatiently did he long for night again, and doubted not that, in the mysterious passages of sleep, the good ghost would again appear and finish the work he had begun.

At length, after an almost interminable delay, night came, and he went to bed, and finally slept. Again the vision appeared. Again the Indian King stood before him, clothed in furs and gold, and again commenced the narration of his story. Much to Joachim's disappointment, he went back to the very beginning; and he thought there was a loftiness of bearing about him, almost amounting to haughtiness, which he did not notice before; and he referred it to disappointment, and perhaps dissatisfaction at the result of his previous visit. Trou-

bled at the thought, exactly at the same point in the tale as before, he awoke. Gazing hurriedly around he was quite sure that the pale glow of a sulphurous light, though faint and fast fading, still clung to the room; and that he caught a dim and imperfect glimpse of the shade, as it disappeared in the extreme corner of his tent.

But all this was matter of small consolation. The main point remained as obscure as ever; and if he cursed himself on the previous night, he now felt more than half disposed to make a warning and example of himself, by the execution on his own person of a summary vengeance. He made no further effort for sleep; indeed, the attempt were vain, and if not vain, useless; for what ghost, especially of a monarch, could be expected to wait on his nod and beck, to come and go at his bidding? He was the most unfortunate man alive, and perchance would have gone distracted before morning had it not luckily occurred to him that the supernatural calendar is arranged by threes, and that the morrow night, being the third of the series, would without doubt conclude the affair, and lead to the full fruition of his wishes.

Comforted and at length cheered by this happy thought, his confidence returned, and he relaxed nothing on the following day of his suddenly-assumed importance. Reflection, indeed, did but establish his mind; he now considered it certain that he was a made man; and accordingly cast about him for a confidant to whom he might reveal, and with whom he might enjoy anew, the story of his prospective riches and honors. On balancing the subject maturely in his mind, he pitched on Ambrose, the personal attendant or valet of Don Ferdinand and who by reason of position, added to natural shrewdness, was a character of much importance in the camp, to subserve the purpose of a friend on the occasion. To him, with a profound solemnity, such as the subject demanded, and with many hems and haws, Joachim Blazo made a clean breast of his

visions of the night, and of the visions of greatness which oppressed him.

Ambrose listened with a mixture of incredulity and wonder. At first he was only prevented from stretching his mouth, as near as possible, from one auditory orifice to the other, by the fear of giving offense ; but soon his superstition and avarice both became enlisted, and he smoothed his face into an attitude of meek and respectful attention. The expert Joachim secured his conversion by assuming the entire responsibility of the affair, and staking his veracity on the issue, assuring him, independent of evidence, that it was all gospel truth ; and taking into the account the reputation of old Blazo for anomalous wisdom, and the traditions of the mine, Ambrose very frankly acknowledged that the revelations of the Indian King might very well turn out to be true. He furthermore cautioned the dreamer to keep the affair a profound secret from every body besides ; and advised him, by all means, to bring matters to a speedy crisis with the ghost.

Pleased with this counsel, and greatly elated at the idea of so respectable a follower as Ambrose, Joachim Blazo only awaited the going down of the sun to retire to his couch.

Chapter Thirty-seven.

JOACHIM, IN DESPAIR, INTRODUCES HIS NECK TO A NOOSE. HIS WISH GRATIFIED, AND HIS DREAM FINISHED.

"Here's music
In this bag shall wake her, though she had drank opium,
Or eaten mandrakes."

JOACHIM BLAZO slipped on his night-cap, and hastily doffing his small-clothes and hopping into bed, composed his limbs in decent order, and determinately closed his eyes. He was never more resolute with his pickaxe in a ditch than he was now to go to sleep; and after a half hour or so had elapsed, he was naturally surprised at his poor success. He turned over on his bed and examined himself critically to ascertain if he could detect any evidences of drowsiness. He yawned, and felt encouraged. He yawned again and again, and finally discovered that he was holding his jaws gaping to their utmost extension, for the purpose of deceiving himself as to the exact condition of his symptoms. Still he said to himself, "I have certainly committed an involuntary yawn, once and again; and after yawning comes sleep." More at ease in his mind, he fell to contriving what he should do with his riches.

He mentally transported a ship-load of treasure to Spain, and started on a career of splendor which would have shamed the Ferdinands. He builded him a palace which outvied the Alhambra, allied himself with a young and beautiful princess, and sat himself quietly down beneath his own vine. But a person of his consequence could not be supposed to remain in

seclusion. His unambitious privacy was disturbed, his happy domestic life was broken in upon—oh, how much against his wishes!—and he was dragged forth by his sovereign, proclaimed the purest and wisest of men, and made prime minister of the realm; and the simple name of Joachim Blazo, more precious to him than all the high-sounding titles of kings and conquerors, in despite of his humility and blushes, became swallowed up and lost in the magnificent appellation of the Marquis of Spangdangleo.

The call of the sentinels announcing the hour of midnight and the safety of the fortress here startled him, and his fanciful castles fell. He was somewhat injured by the shock; and in the confusion attendant on the catastrophe, the beautiful princess and the Marquis of Spangdangleo ran off together, and left him alone with the ruins. When he had sufficiently collected his scattered senses, he had also the additional mortification to perceive that he was not yet asleep.

He counted a thousand and one; but in vain. He tried every other recipe of which, in the course of his life, he had heard to induce somnolency; but worse and worse it was with him. If on the two preceding nights he had been forced to content himself with a single meager nap, and the first chapter of the revelations in which his very existence was bound up, it did now seem as though this third prophetic period, this present blessed hemisphere of darkness, was not to vouchsafe him even that.

But it could not well be possible. Such a gross violation of the rules and precedents of the court of dreams was neither to be expected nor endured. This was the great third night, the time when, according to the common law which had governed the subject from time immemorial, the ghostly visitation and relation should culminate and end; and he could not believe, and did not believe, but that such would now be the case, until the pale day looked into his tent and stared him

full in the face. Then indeed he dragged himself from his bed, more dead than alive, and in his own opinion a ruined man. Weak, nervous, and haggard, he was truly a pitiable object, and for that time might well have escaped from labor on the plea of sickness. But he waited not to be excused; he could not endure that any human eye should see him; and to the inquiries of Ambrose, who was anxiously awaiting his appearance, he returned a wild and maniac laugh, and rushed out of the camp and up the side of the mountain.

Nearly crazed to a certainty was Joachim Blazo by his disappointments, which were of that peculiar nature against which human sagacity and foresight are unable to provide. He had sought a dream, and could not find it. He had, as he believed, been fooled, baffled, and betrayed by a ghost.

Careless of life and limb, he kept on his headlong career, as fast and as headlong as could possibly be expected in an uphill course such as he had chosen. On getting out of sight of the fortress, however, he turned in a horizontal direction, where his opportunities were vastly better for leaping precipices and plunging down horrible chasms. Having run in this manner for a long distance, and made several wonderful and hairbreadth escapes, he at length sunk down on the ground completely exhausted. The spot was a little mossy hollow among the rocks, surrounded by desolation and gloom, a fit place for the last chapter in the life of a disappointed man. Joachim Blazo acknowledged the omen. The sweat was pouring from him in torrents. He puffed and gasped like a dying porpoise in his involuntary attempts to regain the faculty of respiration; and as he cast a last sad look toward the blue sky, ere his final night should shut in, he observed a branch of witch-hazel hanging down invitingly above him. Accepting the hint, without more ado he made a noose of his handkerchief, and slipped it over his neck. It was easy to fasten the other extremity to the tree, but there did not seem to be

any well-arranged jumping-off place at hand; and singularly enough, at this stage of the proceeding, it occurred to him that without the very best facilities, the operation he proposed would be unpleasant. So feeling very much disposed for rest of some kind, he stretched himself on the moss, and was soon in a profound sleep.

There was no danger now that the fertility of his fancy, or any little spiritual punctilio would awake him. He snored like a seahorse; and thought nothing further of this world or the other, gold, princesses, or ghosts, or even of his own most terrible disappointments, until the middle of the afternoon. By that time his physical man had somewhat renewed its vigor, and his lethargy became less deep. His thoughts began to skip about again, and to run in their accustomed channels: and again he was in the mood for dreams.

Once more the Indian King stood before him, but the expression of his countenance was this time mild and agreeable; and Joachim felt no fear. Indeed, the specter condescended to assure him that he had chalked no scores against him, and owed him no ill will; and that now he had come to do him substantial good, and to make an end of his revelations.

He began as on the two former occasions, and related his story, going over the same ground word for word. When this was accomplished, with a dexterity which showed that he understood his business, he coiled a noose in a belt of wampum, and slipping it over Joachim's head, just so far that it held fast under his nose and ears, he whipped him up into the air, or down into the earth, Joachim could not exactly tell which; and a moment after both were standing in the mine. The men were there all busy at their work. This Joachim readily saw, but none of them appeared to take the least notice of him. There stood his own barrow and shovel, already rusting for lack of use: and while the very sight of

them made him melancholy, he heard that scapegrace of an Ambrose say, that he did not see how such an old fool as Blazo could get lunatic; for he always supposed it was necessary for people to have brains, in order to become demented.

Justly incensed at this most ungenerous and infamous remark, aimed, too, at an absent man, Joachim felt greatly inclined to resent it on the spot; but his patron, the ghost of the Indian King, just at that moment beginning to manifest a little impatience, he contented himself with inwardly vowing that Ambrose should never finger the first brass farthing of his riches, and gave a respectful attention.

"Joachim Blazo!" said the shade of the monarch, in a loud, solemn voice, which it was marvelous indeed that the workmen did not hear, "Joachim Blazo, thou just man, give ear! Dost thou see that little red and blue stone there, about twice as big as thy nose, which is none of the smallest?"

To which Joachim with a very reverential bow replied:

"Most gracious and benevolent ghost! If it please your majesty, I do."

"Well, then," continued the King, "the treasure is there—beneath that very stone, I say: do you hear?" And without more ado, to impress the momentous revelation properly on Joachim's mind, as appeared, he seized his rubicund nose between his thumb and fore-finger, and gave it a substantial tweak.

"I do! I do!" roared Joachim in terror; "if it please your august sovereignty!"

"Have done with those titular distinctions, Joachim Blazo," said the ghost, sternly. "They are entirely out of place in my present abode. I am no longer a monarch but a subject; a mere shadow of a man, a wreath of smoke, a puff of air. But now you know the spot, Joachim! Remember! Remember! Blood was shed in the burial of these treasures; and blood must be shed in exhuming, and bringing them again to upper earth!"

The ghost then proceeded in a very kind and familiar manner, having finished, as it seemed, the graver and more impressive parts of his discourse, and perceiving also that his listener was a little quavering, in consequence of his mention of blood, to impart to Joachim some concise but very necessary instructions. He told him that the gold must be reclaimed between the hours of midnight and three o'clock in the morning; and that the digging and removal must be conducted in profound silence, so far as the human voice was concerned—positively, without a word being spoken. He furthermore instructed him how to describe a magic circle; a thing he might very properly have omitted, as Joachim already understood it quite as well as himself: and imparted to him several cabalistic words, by the utterance of which, at the proper time, and under the prescribed conditions, the proprietorship of the treasure would be transferred from the demons under the earth, and the demons of the air, and be securely vested in himself.

Having at last finished his instructions, and urged on his listener a faithful and exact adherence to them, the ghost of the Indian King, with a very complaisant farewell, vanished into thin air: and Joachim awoke. There, just above him, waved the witch-hazel limb, as when he sunk into repose; and the handkerchief was still around his neck, save that in his battles with the flies, he had somewhat enlarged the noose, and worked a part of it quite up against his nose. Soon he recollected with terror, that not long since he had made deliberate preparations to hang himself. The necessity for this extreme proceeding being now happily obviated, he wondered at the folly which possessed him. He could not look at the tree without a shudder; and hastily drew the ominous coil from his neck, in a flurry of apprehension, lest a plot might exist between it and the bush, to finish the operation without consulting him.

But after all, he had barely escaped a more horrible fate as he slept. The flies, indeed, had nearly murdered him. They must have tormented him for sport as well as aliment; for his nasal organ was covered with blood; and never of very moderate dimensions, was now swollen to a double size; while eyes and lips and throat and hands bore unmistakable evidences of the heartless and bloody revel in which they had indulged.

"But the gold! the gold!" said Joachim. "I am the seventh son of a seventh son: and I recollect that my mother said at my birth, that I was born to good luck and a fortune. Hurrah! for Joachim Blazo!"

Having thus given vent to his pent-up emotions, with a shout whose echoes reverberated among the rocks far down the mountain, he cut a stick from the witch-hazel tree, both as a memento and a wand of office: and feeling by this time the strong cravings of hunger, carefully commenced a descent of the hill toward the camp. Nevertheless, as he went, though absolutely torn with the pangs of a crying appetite, having now eaten nothing for nearly twenty-four hours, he kept out a cool and calculating eye. He viewed the ship-loads of treasure in the mine as absolutely his. But that immense mountain, whose full size he had never yet been able to compass even with his eyes, must contain oceans of wealth besides. Perhaps Providence, in its inscrutable wisdom, intended that Joachim Blazo should become the richest man that the world had ever known. He therefore paused from time to time, and dug up handfuls of earth, and examined the crevices in the rocks; or stopping by some spring or hillock, he held his witch-hazel wand over a particular spot of ground, and carefully noted the indications. Night found him thus employed, and compassionately drove him home, that he might eat.

Chapter Thirty-eight.

MIDNIGHT CONJURATIONS.

"And now our orgies let's begin."

THOUGH particularly nettled at Ambrose, the first thing Joachim Blazo did on his return to the camp, after filling his stomach, was to seek that individual and impart to him his wondrous and joyous success. Between the two, a plan for future operations was very shortly matured. Half a dozen of the boldest and sturdiest rascals in the fortress, selected from among Don Ferdinand's followers, the particular cronies of Ambrose, were partly let into their counsels, and induced to join them. No time was to be lost: they determined to make a beginning of the business that very night.

But Joachim was now a thorough convert to the theory of threes, and had little faith in success short of the third night; and could he in his wisdom have contrived any way of coming at the third period of the series, without the intervention of the first two, it would have greatly delighted him. But after a good deal of perplexity in his own mind, and some argument with Ambrose, as he could not just at the moment see his way clear, he felt bound in candor and fairness to yield the point.

A little before midnight, according to appointment, Joachim and his worthy associates issued from the camp. Their arrangements were now deemed fully matured. Conventional signs had been substituted in the place of words; and each

one was to take his cue and directions immediately from Blazo, the acknowledged projector and leader of the enterprise. As they passed along the causeway in the direction of the mine, all were struck with the notion that there was something peculiar in the night. The moon looked sleepy and colorless, the stars were small and distant; and as was afterward testified before the court of inquiry, there was nothing human either in the atmosphere or earth. The sky was high and chalky, and the ground was like a drum. A mere footfall seemed to threaten an earthquake, and all nature appeared as though it had the palsy.

Little moved by these ominous signs, the courageous Blazo, bearing the witch-hazel wand before him in his right hand, in his left a lantern, entered the cave, and the rest with more or less trepidation followed. The red and blue stone, which was to designate the exact locality of the treasure, was readily discovered; indeed, it was an old acquaintance of Joachim, he having dug it up a few days before, and, struck with its singular appearance, deposited it for safe keeping in an obscure corner of the mine, where it was now found. As it was triumphantly pointed out, all gazed with open eyes, and exchanged glances of silent wonder with each other.

Blazo now gave the signal agreed on, and the rest fell back a few paces, leaving him alone with the mysterious stone. It was now that the important part of the business—the ceremonies for the disenchantment of the treasure—was to commence. Cool and collected, Joachim turned his lantern to the right, and then to the left. Before taking any decisive step, he determined to have every thing clearly arranged in his own mind; and all the while he was skillfully laying out the work that was before him. His companions regarded him with equal awe and admiration. He then deliberately drew a circle round the red and blue stone with his wand, leaving a slight mark. Next he strewed along the line a plentiful supply of

some fine powder, which with great privacy he had that very evening compounded. To be sure, this last had not been directed by the ghost; but then Joachim had a recipe for such a charm, which was good in all sorts of conjurations; and on ascertaining that he could procure the materials from Doctor Oquetos, with the exception of one article which he decided to be unimportant, to make certainty more sure, he determined to employ it.

Fastening a lighted match to the end of his wand, Blazo now took his station within the magic ring. He reverently bowed to the east, and then to the west; to the north, and again to the south; and passing his flaming brand seven times around his head in a circle, and at the same time pronouncing the cabalistic sentence, according to instructions, he set fire to the train. The effect was immediate. To be sure, the powder burned slowly, with a faint blue flame and a most intolerable stench; but the potency of the mystical words could not be gainsayed. Eight unimpeachable witnesses subsequently affirmed, that no sooner were they uttered, than a rumbling noise was heard, the ground shook under their feet, and a black vapor rolled through the cave, among which strange creatures were to be seen flitting about, and sighing and screaming as they went.

But seven of these veracious witnesses did not long remain to watch the progress of affairs. In pale affright, with their noses in their hands, they rushed to the mouth of the mine; while Joachim, the hero of the scene, scorning to fly, was left alone to cope with the visible and invisible terrors of the hour. But luckily he knew it not. The clouds with which he had surrounded himself, effectually concealed from him the flight of his companions. He supposed their eyes were on him; and though at this period it is quite possible that he might have acknowledged a slight degree of nervousness, in spite of the fumes which nearly smothered him, and

the mysterious noises which filled the air, and the alarming sounds of the retreating footsteps, he resolutely stood his ground.

But there is a point beyond which mortal firmness and courage may not endure; and at length it so fell out that a terrific hoot was uttered close by his ear; and immediately thereafter an unknown thing—beast, bird, ghost, or devil, he knew not what—came full butt into his face. Joachim sent forth one loud, long, agonizing groan, which seemed to come up from the very foundations of his chest, and sunk on the ground in a swoon.

His brave companions, at that trying crisis, had just gained the open air; yet they were not so far away but that they distinctly heard the solemn sound which he emitted; whereupon they came to the sage conclusion that he had been worsted by the demons he had raised, and very likely had been carried bodily away. They made slight pause, however, in their flight, until they had gained a secure distance from the theater of danger, when they came to a halt; and with pale faces and trembling tongues exchanged congratulations with each other over their marvelous escape. They puffed, and blowed, and cleared their lungs of the smoke, and looked wistfully and fearfully back at the mine. All there appeared quiet and natural enough, save that a slight mist was playing around the terrible mouth.

"Poor Joachim!" said one.

"He has gone to his final account," said another.

"He has failed in his silly undertaking," said a third.

"He has died as the fool dieth," said a fourth.

"He has met with his just deserts, for daring to disturb the spirits of the dead," said a fifth, reverentially crossing himself.

"Saint Pacomo!" exclaimed a sixth. "But my heart misgave me from the first. I wanted nothing to do with this presumptuous, wicked business."

"Fools! cowards!" exclaimed Ambrose, who was a cool knave, and already began to suspect that they were all more scared than hurt. "I wonder what you are prating about! If the mine be full of infernal imps from the pit, I for one am going back to see what has become of Blazo. If the rest of you are afraid, stay where you are, or sneak off into your beds."

"Afraid!" echoed six voices at once. "That is a pretty story, Ambrose. The stench of Joachim's villainous powder drove us all out for breath, and you among the rest; but who talks of being afraid?"

"Come with me, then, my lads," said Ambrose. "It shall never be said that I deserted a comrade in the hour of need."

Thus saying, the valiant Ambrose led the way again to the mine. First reconnoitering, they then cautiously entered, and slowly approached the scene of the late incantations. The witch-powder had ceased to burn, and the fumes and the smoke were by this time in a good degree dissipated. Joachim's lantern still maintained its perpendicular, emitting a faint and flickering light; and by its side, flat on his back, lay the immortal Blazo, to all appearance dead; while an expression of awful horror sat on his face, sufficient to quail the stoutest heart, even of those bold men who had dared to return to the rescue. Seizing him by the legs and arms, however, they speedily dragged him to the open air; where, as the inspiring breath of heaven struck him, with another harrowing groan, he came to himself.

"Good Joachim!" said his companions, kindly: "you are safe. Joachim! Joachim! do you hear? you are safe. We have rescued you, at terrible odds, to be sure; but you are now, thanks to the saints, safe and sound, we hope."

"Oh! oh! oh!" bellowed Joachim, as he struggled lustily for his wind, "my insides are all burned up, and my outsides mauled to a jelly. I never shall breathe a live breath again as long as I live."

It was evident that nothing further could be accomplished that night: indeed, the idea of again venturing into the mine was not mooted. Supporting old Blazo between them, the gold-seekers silently and disconsolately re-entered the camp, and sneaked away to their several quarters.

The next day they presented a woe-begone appearance. With the exception of Ambrose, all looked troubled and care-worn, and hung their heads as though they had been stealing sheep, and expected to be detected. He was composed of too brazen materials, and was too well schooled in deception, to suffer his apprehensions to come upon the surface and be seen; and so only appeared as though he had spent a night in debauch, as was frequently his wont. The rest bore the gibes of their companions at their altered demeanor as best they might, and repented them that they had had any thing to do with an undertaking so frightful. As night approached, however, they came together as though by accident, to talk of the past and counsel for the future.

"I did not expect success, and do not now, short of the third night," said Joachim Blazo; whose great soul indulged no thought of retreat; and who had ruminated and sweat and suffered so much, that he now held his very existence, and all beyond in which he was interested, staked on the momentous hazard. "But we have gained the right of possession: and our victory of last night, I am thinking, will make all the rest quite easy."

"Think you so?" said Ambrose, his double-meaning eye brightening.

"Verily I do," returned Blazo. "We stood our ground manfully."

"Ah, yes," said the others, "we stood our ground."

"And the demons retreated," continued Joachim. "That was evident enough from the noise."

"What noise?" asked a green one.

"Why, the noise they made in running away. The pattering of their feet, down in the ground, sounded as though there had been a whole troop. Did you not hear it?"

"Aye, aye, to be sure. We heard it," replied they all.

"Well," added Blazo, "devils, when fairly ousted, scarcely ever return to the fight again. My grandmother often said, that once soundly flogged, they were your slaves forever."

"But we did have a terrible time of it last night, did we not, Joachim?" said Ambrose. "Nothing but your presence of mind, and my bravery, seconded by the others, saved our lives, surrounded as we were by dangers great and small. You were a gone sucker, Blazo, had I not broke through and rescued you, at the risk of my heart's blood."

"Did you see those bats flying around in the smoke?" said the green one.

"Bats?" echoed another. "Why, man, they were twice as big."

"Three times, at least," said still another: "and the mine was full of them."

"The demon that battered my face," said Joachim, "was of the size of a goose, and shaped like an owl. He had claws like an eagle and fists like a man."

"The size of a goose!" said Ambrose. "It was all of that, Blazo. I saw it very distinctly. There were several of them, and they screamed louder than so many panthers. It is enough to make one's blood curdle to think of it."

"But the treasure will repay us," said Joachim. "You shall all be made rich out of that, richer than kings or even priests."

"You saw the heap in your vision, Joachim?" said one.

"Why, yes," returned Blazo. "To be sure I did."

"Well, how large might it be?"

"It was so mixed up with the bones," replied Joachim, "that I could not exactly tell. It was a big pile, however; as big, I should think, as a considerable sized hill."

"All in bars of gold?"

"Mainly."

"And how large might the bars be?"

"Why, man," said the perplexed Joachim, "the gold, you see, was like bars of iron. It shone like the sun: it flashed like millions of diamonds, until my eyes were dazzled, and all my senses overwhelmed."

These replies were deemed satisfactory and conclusive: and without expressing any of that reluctance to proceed, which each had felt so strongly through the day, they set themselves seriously to digesting their scheme of operations for the coming hour of twelve.

Chapter Thirty-nine.

A GRAND CATASTROPHE.

"But when this unexpected foe
Seemed starting from the gulf below—
I care not though the truth I show—
I trembled with affright."

PRECISELY as the noon of night wheeled up to the zenith, the gallant gold-diggers were on the ground. But it is needless to detail at length each particular occurrence of the night, inasmuch as it did not prove to be the final period; and was characterized by few of the horrors of the first. Suffice it that they began to dig within the charmed borders of the mystic ring; and for three mortal hours, with patient sweat and toil, and pick and bar and shovel, continued to enlarge their excavation. The supernatural guard over the treasure, which had given them so much trouble the night before, did not see fit to molest them. To be sure, one of the number afterward deposed, that, having left his work for a brief moment, and gone out to the mouth of the mine, a thing which he denominated a laughing devil sat upon a tree nigh by, and with the most extraordinary sounds and grimaces mocked and derided him. But this item, we feel bound to say, should be taken with some grains of allowance, for the several reasons: that it was testified to but by one witness; that whatever he saw must have been seen by a very faint moonlight, and quite likely while in a state of considerable excitement; and lastly, that the existence at all of such a creature as a laughing devil

is extremely apocryphal, as it is not described in any of our natural histories whatever.

At the hour of three, the party, thoroughly tired out, but well satisfied with the omens and the progress they had made, after carefully concealing the pit they had digged with a covering of timbers and earth, adjourned over to the following night.

On the next day they felt quite at liberty to indulge in a certain gayety of mood, and to solace the checkered past, its wants and cares and sorrows, with anticipations of a brilliant future: and this happy frame of mind could hardly fail to manifest itself in their deportment. Accordingly they took airs upon themselves and quite overtopped their fellows. They threw out obscure hints of important changes likely to occur; and expressed themselves with a freedom, while speaking of their superiors, which created surprise, and was deemed to border on open insubordination. They frequently run together in a knot; and the men seeing others in such close brotherhood with Blazo, made up their minds that his madness was infectious: and piously crossing themselves, invoked all the saints in the calendar to shield them from its influence.

Indeed, to Joachim and his co-workers, all ahead looked smiling enough. Fortune was evidently on their side: the legions of the pit had been vanquished on a fair field: the third night, the mystic period of the cycle, big with the award of fate, was at hand: and around the result, uncertainties were no longer suffered to linger.

It came; and from the going down of the sun; from the moment that the breath of the dusky horses of darkness, usually called twilight, was discoverable upon the mountain, it was plain that it was to be a proper night for a crisis—a victory or a catastrophe. As they passed out of the camp and took their way toward the mine, they felt that they were

no longer sustained by that perfect satisfying confidence of success which had buoyed them up through the day. They knew of no solid reasons to engender doubts; but then the clouds were hurrying in black masses through the sky, smothering the moon and stars: the winds howled dismally around the hill, among the rocks, and through the shrieking trees: and every breath and twig and spire of mountain grass seemed laden with a voice. The spirits, it was evident, were all abroad for work.

"We shall have a time of it to-night, I am thinking," observed Ambrose.

"Blood must be shed!" muttered Joachim between his teeth, with a start; that part of the revelations of the ghost, now for the first time striking him with its full force. "It may be Ambrose, or Pedro, or Gonzalez, or myself—who knows?"

But he was careful that these half-spoken harrowing thoughts should not reach the ears of his companions. In all the relations he had given of his interviews with the Indian King, somehow or other this important item had been forgotten: and he could not find it in his heart to add to the present terror and dismay of his followers by mentioning it now. Indeed, the fulfillment of the asseveration did not of necessity involve the loss of life: and if it did, it seemed quite improbable that the victim should be one of his own victorious corps, who for two nights had maintained their ground against the combined forces of the whole infernal world.

But on this night, with pity be it spoken, these same brave men entered the mine, the scene of their former exploits, with every mark of abject fear written on their faces. Their rebellious hearts thumped lustily against their ribs; the faculty of respiration was obstructed, so that they breathed with a hollow sound; and their knees smote each other as

they walked. Being dim of sight withal, it is hardly probable that they were fully conscious of the cowardly demonstration they were making; or if they were, they prudently garnered the knowledge for the inner man, and carefully preserved that solemn silence to which they were forewarned by the ghost.

Arrived at the spot, they set down their lights, and paused a moment to take breath. Ambrose was pale and haggard enough; while Joachim Blazo, who felt that on his shoulders rested worlds of responsibility, and that to him did the others look as a sort of a guide-board for the direction of their own demeanor, assumed to feel very much composed and at his ease. With a great show of deliberation he lighted a torch, which really threw its glare on a very unearthly scene.

The so-called mine was in effect a dreary cavern, extending for several rods, on a descending plane, into the body of the mountain. One of its sides was near at hand: the others were lost in a deep obscurity, a darkness visible, which the lanterns and the torch could not penetrate, save at one point, where a spot like a faint, ragged moon marked the place of entrance. Overhead was an uneven roof of loose slate rock, which, as it crumbled badly on being exposed to the air, it had been found necessary to support: and scattered here and there without order, were the rough trunks of forest trees doing the office of pillars. The gold-seekers gazed fearfully around. Never had the place looked so gloomy, so desolate, so sepulchral.

Joachim was the first to turn to work. In a sort of desperation he seized a shovel, and the others followed his example. The pit was very shortly uncovered, and the digging commenced. For near two hours did they toil, silently, incessantly, and without untoward accident or malicious interruption. As the excavation was somewhat cramped in its

dimensions, they spelled each other, part holding the lights above, while others delved below.

At this time, Ambrose and Joachim being both in the pit, a low, rumbling sound was heard. They stopped and listened. It continued; and was plainly just beneath their feet. With a most remarkable prescience, the great Blazo at once perceived, or thought he perceived, that their invisible enemy was attempting to steal the march on them, and remove the treasure. Full of this idea, in tremulous alarm, he asked, by signs, for a crowbar, which was quickly placed in his hands. Once in his grasp, he elevated it as though it had been a toy; and with vigorous and oft-repeated strokes applied its nether point to the lowest depression of the pit. The instrument came in contact with, and struck, a solid and resounding something. Without doubt it was a wedge, a beam, a molten mass of gold: and thereupon the joy of the old man incontinently exploded, like a discharge of beer.

"Bravo! I have it, boys!" he shouted: and the substance against which the iron rested, as all unitedly averred, slid away with a grating noise, and was no longer there. The spell was broken. The sound of a human voice had dissolved the potent charm; and the demons resumed their sway.

"Fool! fool!" said Ambrose, "you have ruined all."

"Fool! fool!" echoed the rest: and the eyes of all glared furiously on Blazo, their wise and veteran chief, as though they thirsted for his blood. He meanwhile remained more calm than could have been expected. Determined forthwith to satisfy his doubts, and to remove or confirm the apprehensions of his followers, again he reared aloft the massive iron; and concentrating his Herculean strength in one good blow, he struck. The result, no language can depict. Like a blackened ray of light, like a harpoon when projected at a whale, like a something that was and is not, the crowbar, without a sound to mark its flight, shot, or was wrenched as

he declared, out of his hands, and disappeared in the direction of the celestial empire of China. Immediately a noise was heard, whiz! whiz! whiz! and a jet of water, as though propelled from the hose of a monster fire-engine, struck the astonished veteran in the face, and subdivided a thousand different ways, in flashing streams, in diamond drops, in silvery spray, immersing all in a cool and invigorating bath. The lights were extinguished: and an exulting laugh, as was deposed, from a hundred unseen throats, rung through the cavern, followed by a tremendous concussion, like the report of a piece of ordnance, which shook the mountain to its center.

This was too much. Terrified to madness, with cries for mercy which they did not expect to find, the gold-diggers made an effort to escape. But each one, as he turned, found himself grappled by a foe. Ah, then indeed commenced the tug of war! The first night's horrors, the dread witch-powders and the choking smoke, the screams of demons and the hoot of owls, the laughing devils and the flying bats, were naught compared to this—were child's play to the battle that now raged!

The good Joachim, as he clambered up from the pit, found himself in the grasp of a monster, whose eyes, so he averred, were live coals, whose breath was a burning issue of sulphur. The creature seized him by the throat, and the breathless hero, as a last chance, gasping forth, "Blood must be shed," whipped out his knife, and lunged full at the vitals of his adversary: whereupon he was let loose.

Ambrose did not escape so well. On the rim of the pit, a shaggy being, which he described as an anomalous compound of demon and brute; clinched him in his arms. After a short but desperate struggle, in which he performed prodigies of valor, he succeeded in getting his adversary by the throat. At this point, an unseen blow, he was inclined to think from

a supernal pistol, as he saw a flash, struck him in the abdomen, inflicting a severe wound, much like the cut of a knife. He fell: and the demon, no doubt supposing him to be dead, left him.

Pedro, at the culmination of the catastrophe, sprung toward the mouth of the mine. He was headed in the darkness, however, by an immense creature whom it was impossible for him to describe. Still, having his pickaxe in his hand, he aimed a random blow, and had the good fortune to strike him down. But at the same instant another seized him by the hair of his head, and whisked him around the cave as though he had been a mere dry leaf whirled by a gust of autumn; until the lock giving way, he escaped with a flayed poll, and the loss of a portion of his queue.

Gonzalez, after a short engagement with some nondescript being, no doubt similar in most respects to those we have attempted to describe, was prostrated by a blow which fractured his leg. Bar Jose, another of the party, and the only one whom fortune so far favored, was entirely victorious. Following the example of a celebrated hero at the siege of Troy, after vanquishing his enemy, he seized him by the hair, and dragged him through the mine.

The rest of the party got off with only slight injuries: and ere long, but in separate parcels, each found his way back to the camp. But truly they were in a shocking plight. Their tattered garments, their disfigured faces, their blood and wounds, were not the worst of it. They were frenzied with terror—for the time, they were madmen: and though their bodies might be healed, ten to one the hurts to the invisible dweller within might not so readily recover.

Chapter Forty.

THE COURT OF INQUIRY. LAST HOURS AND CONFESSION OF A VILLAIN. TO ARMS!

"Traitor, thou liest!"

THE groans and lamentations of the gold-seekers, as they regained the camp, produced the uproar before mentioned, which aroused the Spanish leaders from their beds. At the investigation which succeeded, most of the preceding facts and incidents were brought to light, clothed in an abundance of superstitious and fanciful drapery, which imparted to it much of the air and interest of a romance.

Accompanied by Don Ferdinand de Cassino, his reverence Signor Antonio, and Doctor Oquetos, as members of the board of inquiry, Don Manuel proceeded to the mine. They found the pit of the treasure-seekers full of water, and perceived that a spring had been let in upon the works, which might give them some trouble. The reported concussion was readily accounted for. A large mass of rock had fallen from the roof of the mine, sufficient, had it come on Joachim and his followers, to quiet them forever. Bar Jose was set to look for the tuft of hair, which, it was premised, might remain near the scene of his exploit. It was recovered: and on comparison, was found to correspond, marvelously well, with the black locks of Pedro.

After a patient and most laborious session, and a critical examination of the wounded, on the part of Dr. Oquetos, the opinion of the court was rendered. The learned doctor him-

self, as the one best qualified to deal with such a subject, officiated as spokesman; and proceeded to declare: first, that the limb of Gonzalez had received a compound fracture, which, according to the best lights of science, might easily have been inflicted by a certain instrument, vulgarly called a pickaxe. Secondly, that the wound of Ambrose was a smooth cut, which might very well have been produced by a pointed blade, like that of Joachim Blazo's knife; but he was careful to add, that that powerful and mysterious fluid, known as electricity, occasionally performs surprising antics; and that it is a chemical agent, on the action of which the most profound acquaintance with science will not enable one to calculate with precision. Thirdly, that Blazo's iron bar, might, by possibility, have left his hands from the force of its own gravity, superadded to the momentum of his stroke; instead of having been wrested from him by the indignant inhabitants of the other world; always presupposing the existence of a cavity beneath, or at least an absence of solid earth; which in the present case, should his supposition, which he acknowledged to be novel, prove correct, would probably be found to be a subterranean fount. This theory, he was of the opinion, would also account for the presence of water in the pit; and to render it more clear, he branched off in a long and learned dissertation on gravitation, compressibility, and resistance, which we need not follow. Fourthly, that it was certainly possible that Bar Jose, by some unaccountable error, in the confusion of the mélée, might have pulled Pedro's hair. On this point, he was sorry to say, an honest difference of opinion existed among the members of the bench. While some of them were disposed to view the whole affair as an unfortunate scuffle among eight individuals, who had gradually wrought themselves up to the verge of idiocy or madness, he had been compelled to arrive at a different conclusion.

What that precise conclusion was, can only be surmised

from what has gone before: for at this point, Don Manuel, as the presiding officer of the board, closed the proceedings.

It was found necessary to cut a drain from the spring, of which the renowned Blazo was the discoverer: and as he, together with such of his late associates as were not disabled, was put into the trench, they had abundant opportunity to explore the locality about which their day-dreams still lingered. The crowbar was recovered: but the unfortunate words spoken by Joachim, so they still believed, had effectually dissipated the treasure. Not even a bone was discovered, in fulfillment of what they considered one of the most extraordinary revelations ever vouchsafed to man. Most of them, however, gradually forgot their glowing expectations, and to appearance sunk back into their former moods. But on Joachim Blazo disappointment wrought its fill. He never held his head up again. Gloomy and dispirited, he became the butt of many a jest which he could poorly bear, and died a broken-hearted man.

Insignificant as was this whole matter, on it was fated to hinge that crisis in the affairs of the Spaniards which the acute reader must long since have foreseen. Don Ferdinand had now completely recovered. The confidence with which their mining operations had been commenced, for some time had been dwindling away. In truth, the prosecution of the work, though still ostensibly continued, was even now a matter of secondary importance, and was fast becoming a mere by-play, to cover other and more engrossing purposes. The two leaders were eyeing each other like hostile generals, neither of whom is exactly prepared for the struggle he sees approaching; and the mining went on, and the customary routine of each day was preserved, lest any change should precipitate the denouement before its time. Don Ferdinand, to be sure, often stormed and sometimes threatened, but still hesitated: while Don Manuel, surrounded by difficulties which

he could perceive no way to surmount, courted delay, and soothed and braved by turns, hoping a salvation for his daughter and himself, of which he could see no promise in their sky.

While things were in this posture, he was one day informed by Signor Antonio that Don Ferdinand's servant, Ambrose, was almost at the last gasp, and very urgent to see him. He was surprised at this, as the chevalier had assured him from time to time that his valet's wounds were not dangerous, and that he was rapidly recovering. He at once accompanied the priest to the quarters of the domestic; and perceived at a glance that the prognostic of the good father was likely to prove too true. Death, it was evident, had arrived in the tent before him, and was already engaged in the execution of his work. To support him, in this trying hour, the wretched man could find no aids within. No God, no Christ, no approving conscience, had been there for years; and he could only look with agony and terror to his priest; while on his face, as legibly as though written with a point of steel, were shadowed forth the horrors of an ill-spent life.

Don Ferdinand and Doctor Oquetos were both present. The chevalier started and turned pale as Don Manuel entered.

"Ambrose is not so bad as they pretend," said he. "All he needs is a little quiet. Let us leave him that he may sleep. Father Antonio will sit by him."

Doctor Oquetos here commenced to give a scientific opinion of the case, which was interrupted by the dying man.

"Leave me," he said, faintly, "all but his excellenza, Don Manuel Torrillo."

The doctor and the priest withdrew. Don Ferdinand, with an obviously increasing restlessness, remained.

"Leave me!" said Ambrose, impatiently.

"I can not at such a moment as this," gasped the chevalier.

"Base tempter!" said Ambrose: "your gold at last has lost

its power over me. I am no longer your slave. I am now, for the brief space that may remain to me, free."

"Villain!" exclaimed Don Ferdinand, in a voice which seemed to issue from his chest, independent of the vocal organs, so deep and husky was it, "where are your oaths?"

Thus saying, he sprung like an enraged beast, and seized the expiring wretch by the throat. The act took Don Manuel entirely by surprise. Unexpectedly called to the chamber of death, he had regarded the extraordinary scene which there presented itself, with dismay. Now, however, arousing his stupefied faculties, he stepped in to the rescue. Seizing the infuriated chevalier, he unclasped his hands from his victim, and shouted for aid. The doctor and the priest who were in waiting without, immediately entered: and Don Ferdinand, casting about him a mingled look of fury and defiance, rushed from the tent.

It was some time before poor Ambrose was sufficiently recovered to speak; and meanwhile, Don Manuel, shocked beyond measure at what had occurred, proposed to retire; when an impatient gesture from the dying man detained him.

"You must hear me now, my lord, or never," said he, with difficulty. "I would do one act of justice before I die. O for strength! O for a voice once more! I have made my confession. Father Antonio has it. Let him read, and I will confirm its truth."

The reverend father produced the paper in question, and read it to his astonished auditors, the truth of each period being solemnly affirmed by Ambrose as he proceeded. The important points, stripped of a mass of useless words which only served to becloud them, were:

That Don Ferdinand de Cassino already had one wife living in Spain, the sister of the confessor, whom he had found it impossible to seduce to his purposes, and so had secretly but lawfully married.

That Don Ferdinand de Cassino was directly the accuser of Don Manuel Torrillo at the court of his sovereign, with the purpose of humbling the pride of the Lady Viola, and reducing both father and daughter to his power: which had resulted in the confiscation of the estates, and the exile of Don Manuel.

That Don Ferdinand de Cassino had twice attempted the assassination of Captain Charles Warwick, once in New York, when Ambrose himself was the instrument, and again at their late meeting by the river.

That Don Ferdinand de Cassino had boasted to the confessor, that he slew the Indian guide who conducted him back to camp on the occasion of his brief captivity with the natives.

And furthermore, that Don Ferdinand was now tampering with the men, those immediately attached to Don Manuel, with the view to a mutiny or outbreak, which should place all, particularly the Lady Viola, at his disposal: and that if her father expected to save her or himself, he had not a moment to lose.

Don Manuel was confounded. Some of these charges he already had good reason to believe correct, and the rest might well be. Unfortunately there was nothing in the character of the man, as he now regarded it, calculated to throw doubt on the solemn dying declarations of his domestic, and his own heart told him they were true. He therefore thanked the miserable wretch, and, at his request, kindly forgave him, so far as his agency in the machinations of his master had been directed against him or his. Recommending him to look up to God as his only refuge and hope, and committing him for the brief period of life that might still remain, to the care and consolation of the doctor and the priest, he then bade him farewell.

As he passed to his own quarters, Don Manuel did not

observe any thing to excite alarm. All appeared as usual, except that scarcely any one was to be seen, and the whole fortress was as still and breathless as the sick chamber he had just left. Ascertaining that his daughter was safe, he at once ordered the drums to beat to arms. The call was sounded; that call, in obedience to which the united Spanish forces had never failed to gather around him and acknowledge him as their senior chief. Now, Hugh O'Brady, Solyman, and a few veterans, who had long been in his service and were attached to his person, alone obeyed the summons. He cast his eyes over them, and though he compelled his features to remain unmoved, at his heart he was in terror. But better one true sword than many traitors. This handful could be trusted. There was no doubt on their faces. They came together with alacrity, and ranged themselves by his side with that resolute bearing, the compressed mouth, and open, steady eye, which showed that they had deliberately chosen their part, and intended to abide it. He looked around for Johnson, but the veteran, a host in himself, was nowhere to be seen.

But a few moments elapsed before Don Ferdinand, at the head of the great body of the men, wheeled into view from the rear of his own quarters and confronted him. Don Manuel's countenance glowed with indignation. Smothering his feelings, however, he returned his half-drawn sword to its scabbard; and advancing a few paces alone, said:

"Don Ferdinand de Cassino, and all ye, good and true men, answer me, I pray you! Why stand ye here in arms against your chief? Your wrongs I have never refused to right. I have been true to you—why are you not true to me?"

"Most gracious sire," returned Don Ferdinand, in a pretended meek and mock heroic tone, "we humbly ask justice for your faithful liege, Ferdinand of Cassino. Nay," continued he, throwing off the mask of the suppliant, and assuming that

pompous, defiant manner which was more natural to him, "we not only ask, we demand it."

"Of what injustice, pray, can Ferdinand of Cassino, the faithful, complain?" said Don Manuel, in a tone of bitter irony which he could not well repress.

"He complains," replied Don Ferdinand, "that the most solemn engagements on the part of Don Manuel Torrillo and his daughter are not fulfilled; that contracts the most sacred, made in the presence of high heaven and our holy church, are by them disregarded and cast aside as things of no account. And, furthermore, he swears that he will submit to such treatment no longer. But to show his unparalleled forbearance, before all these witnesses, he once more condescends to ask that the long-pending marriage between himself and the Lady Viola Torrillo be solemnized. If this be acceded to, it is well; if not, the consequences be on your own heads."

Don Ferdinand paused; and his followers manifested their satisfaction with applause. Don Manuel was about to reply, when the Lady Viola, pale and haggard with affright, looking more like an inhabitant of another world than a being of flesh and blood, rushed before him, and, seizing him by the hand, wildly exclaimed:

"The sacrifice must be made. Father, I am ready!"

A low murmur of commiseration ran through the ranks of both parties, and many of the men in pity, for the moment averted their eyes.

"She can at least have a little time for preparation," said a bold soldier in Don Ferdinand's own ranks.

"Yes," said another, "the marriage can be put off till to-morrow to please her, now she has agreed to have him."

Don Ferdinand frowned and bit his lips.

"Silence, knaves," said he. "To-morrow, and to-morrow! I have sworn it should be to-day."

Don Manuel, meanwhile, was pressing his weeping daugh-

ter to his breast. Imprinting an affectionate kiss on her forehead, he released himself from her, but still held her by the hand.

"Viola!" said he, very deliberately, and in a tone loud enough to be heard by every ear present; "in the fearful presence of that Being who created us all, I swear you shall never, never be the wife of Ferdinand of Cassino."

"Will you not let me save you, father?" said the Lady Viola, imploringly.

"Life is not worth the sacrifice, my dear," returned Don Manuel, calmly. "I am willing to die, if it be God's will."

"We will die together," said the maiden. "It is sweet to trust ourselves to God."

"I am sorry to interrupt your tête-à-tête," said Don Ferdinand with a sneer; "but I must remind you that I am here to claim the fulfillment of a contract. The parties are present, the priest is here. Do you refuse to have the ceremony go on?"

"In the name of justice and mercy, I do," said Don Manuel. "Has the chevalier Cassino a dispensation from the holy mother church, that he would take a second wife, while he already has one living?"

"It is false, false as hell!" exclaimed Don Ferdinand, stamping his foot with rage. "You have been listening to the ravings of Ambrose in his insanity. Poor fellow, he once got the strange notion into his head that because he had a handsome sister, I might be prevailed on to marry her, and make him a great man; and now that his mind is wandering, he has stumbled on the subject again. But here are Pedro, Bar Jose, Gonzalez, and others, born on my own estates, who have known me from infancy. Ask them. They will tell you I have never been married."

"Oh, no!" said Pedro and the rest, thus appealed to. "Our lord has never been married. We are ready to swear to that on the holy evangelists."

"Don Ferdinand," said Don Manuel, "I do not wish to pursue this subject further, before this crowd of menials, yours and mine; it is sufficient for me to say that I now know you, that my eyes have been gradually opening to your qualities for many weeks. I am willing to negotiate with you fairly and honorably for an adjustment of all our differences. But expect nothing beyond that from me. You can but have our lives; and to that, if need be, I and my sweet child will submit."

"Give them until to-morrow," said a voice.

"Till to-morrow! to-morrow!" repeated several others.

Don Ferdinand scowled, and stamped, and swore; but it was evident that he wavered.

"Till to-morrow be it then," at length he said. "Don Manuel Torrillo, I give you till to-morrow noon to redeem your word and written pledge. At the hour of twelve to-morrow the Lady Viola Torrillo becomes the wife of Ferdinand of Cassino. I grant a truce till then; that she may learn to brace her nerves against that maiden terror always so graceful in her sex."

Thus saying Don Ferdinand withdrew his forces; and Don Manuel led his daughter, on whose face a sweet and trustful calm now rested, like the glow of morning on the brow of night, into his quarters. But where was good Michael Johnson in this emergency? Don Manuel and his daughter, during the last trying hour, had anxiously and oft expected him, but he came not; and now all their inquiries were in vain. No one had seen him since an early period of the day.

Chapter Forty-one.

OUR HERO IN HIS EYRIE ON THE HILLS. A YOUNG MAN'S REVERIES AMID THE SOLITUDES OF NATURE.

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea and music in its roar.
I love not man the less but nature more
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal."

WHEN Charles Warwick reached the Susquehanna, on the night he bade adieu to the Spanish fortress, depressed and beclouded as he was in mind, he could not but pause and admire the calm river, and the mock firmament of moon and stars, which nature, with exceeding art, had penciled in the water. What painter with his wizard brush, and pallet where his flashing colors glow, though wrought with magic from the mine, or robbed from flies, or stolen from the sun, can hope to rival her? Those trees that hang adown the crystal deep wave their bright wings for joy; and all the mass of molten silver seems an open window back to paradise.

Warwick looked and sighed and prayed, and became peaceful like the scene before him. The beautiful, as is its proper office, led him up to heaven; and he that looks above finds rest. In a better frame of mind he turned his footsteps up the river. Not that he had any particular object in going in that direction more than another; but he wished to find some nook where he might lie concealed, and from it, like the

eagle from his eyrie, watch his foes, and fly in case of need to serve his friends. One vision of sorrow and beauty filled his soul. It was the Lady Viola—the fearful circumstances in which she was left—and his parting from her, perhaps forever.

Thus occupied in mind, he moved heedlessly on, following the curves of the river, sometimes in the full light of a brilliant moon, and again groping his way through trees and tangled shrubs and over shelving cliffs. Alwyn followed at his heels, with that noiseless tread peculiar to his race, stopping when he stopped, and moving as he moved, as though he had been his shadow; and through the whole night he ventured not to speak, until the lighting up of the east showed that morn was breaking. Then he called Warwick's attention to the fact; and informed him in addition that they were approaching an Indian settlement.

Not caring to meet with any of the natives, the young soldier came to a halt, and took counsel of his watchful companion. Then turning to the left among the hills, the two proceeded for some miles through a wild and broken region of dense forest, until, as they judged, they were far enough away from the villages and haunts of the natives to remain for a few days undisturbed. Making choice of a retired glen, a few hours sufficed to erect a rude hut of poles and bark for their accommodation.

When this was accomplished, Warwick threw himself on the ground, and yielded himself up to his unbroken fancies. There he lay, his head resting on his hand, and for hours moved not. The faithful Alwyn, meanwhile, sat silently by, or sought, near at hand, for such roots, known to the Indians, and wild fruits, as might serve to lengthen out their scanty supply of food. Night came, was succeeded by day, and was nearly at hand again, when Warwick arose, and directing Alwyn to remain behind, disappeared in the forest.

The young Indian waited long and anxiously for the return of his master, which was not until late in the following morning, when he made his appearance worn out with fatigue and want of sleep. He entered the little lodge, took some refreshment, and throwing himself on a bed of leaves which Alwyn had gathered, slept long and quietly.

Notwithstanding this intense and prolonged concentration of thought and feeling on one object, the mind of Charles Warwick was a well-balanced one. True, it was of a vivid kind. Ardent and imaginative, he felt warmly and quickly; but he acted, when the hour of action came, deliberately. The circumstances of his life had thrown him on himself, and had taught him well for his years how to examine, to decide, and to act; and though passion might be strong, and imagination restless and buoyant, a cool judgment was still the anchor of the youth. But when there could be no action for a counterpoise, as in the present case, and affection, hope, and fear had all been spurred to frenzy, then came the strong dominion of feeling, sufficient with him to shut up and paralyze, for the time, all his external senses, and to center his being in a single thought.

Such had been the condition of Warwick from which he aroused himself only at the moment, when he determined at all hazards to ascertain the situation of affairs at the fortress. This he accomplished; and succeeded undiscovered in gaining the presence of Michael Johnson, from whom he obtained such information as did much toward quieting his immediate apprehensions.

For some days thereafter, Alwyn was much of the time hovering about the Spanish camp, spying into its movements, and resorting to a hundred Indian devices to conceal himself from observation; and but little of moment occurred there which he was not prepared to report to his master. Occasionally he fell in with Johnson; and once, as has been seen,

he ventured to discover himself to the Lady Viola and her maid.

Warwick, meanwhile, was left to the resources of his own thoughts. He strove against the unmanly weaknesses, as he was fain to call them, which beset him; and endeavored to amuse himself by hunting among the hills and fishing in the mountain streams. Still he lived but in a waking dream. One single subject engrossed his soul; he could not drive it hence, and with others it refused to mingle. In the bright realms of imagination he discovered a variety of ways in which fortune might still be kind: and Viola his, the waves of his troubled sea were still, the breeze was fresh and balmy, the sky serene, and the voyage of life a brilliant succession of delights. But close by these fond fancies were scowling terrors looking in upon him, whispering or screaming in his ears that hope was merest lunacy, and Viola lost forever. In this light, existence itself was a desert, with burning sands and hot, depressing air, without a flower or blade of grass, or cooling drop of rain; and he pictured out a few brief years of misanthropic being; and himself, though still a youth, in the sere and yellow leaf, and ready for the grave.

And was he then so completely a slave, fettered, bound in the triple chains of the subtile divinity, so that every aspiration of the future, and even life itself, were at the mercy of the stubborn child? Ah, like enough; and he need not have blushed nor pronounced it a weakness. Others were there before him, and many more will follow in the track. Nature hath ordained it; and god or no god, a giant or an infant, whether with silken bands or gyves of steel, he found himself subdued by that passion which the fabled deity is supposed to inspire; one moment yielding to the glowing sunlight of hope, and the next playing with despair. Often as he rambled, his gun and rod were forgotten, and he walked unconscious of the things around him. Again he would awake, and look

abroad, and listen to the birds, and join them in their songs; or pausing on some bold hill, he would scan the unbroken wild, and fancy that the solitude of the woods was but a type of that much more profound which reigned within himself.

But nature's forests are no solitudes. True, man may not be there. The hammer and the axe, the plow, the marble palace, and the clang of war may all be wanting, and still the woods be full of stir and life. They are the workshops of the Creator. Men and their achievements, the music of their voices and their harps, their eloquent words, their poetry and their smiles, the subtile philosophy of their schools, the triumphs of their art, and the monuments of their glory and disgrace, are not needed there. Creative nature in her consecrated halls has a power, a music, a poetry, a philosophy, and a splendor all her own. The waking into being of her germs, whence are to spring alike her monarchs and her vines; the training of her foliage and the painting of her flowers, the molding and ripening of her fruits, and the distilling of her perfumes, these are her forest works. They teach us the power and glory of the Supreme; and though man may never see them, they are not the less admirable; though they subserve not his pleasures or his wants, they furnish food and shelter to a profusion of animated life, absolutely startling in its vastness and beauty, bowers for the tuneful birds, and lodges for the beasts and insects, and harp-strings for the sweeping winds of heaven.

Chapter Forty-two.

DESPONDENCY. AN ANTIQUE LETTER. INACTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

"Fancy enervates, while it soothes the heart,
And while it dazzles wounds the mental sight:
To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
But wraps the hour of woe in tenfold night.
And often when no real ills affright,
Its visionary fiends, an endless train,
Assail with equal or superior might,
And through the throbbing heart and dizzy brain,
And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mortal pain."

DAY after day passed away, and no change occurring in the aspect of his affairs, Warwick gradually sunk into a confirmed condition of despondency. He could only learn of the camp, that things there remained quiet, and that the Lady Viola was more frequently in the open air, and seemed more cheerful and in better health. For this he was thankful, but this alone could not sustain him in his inactivity. He lacked that patient resolution which, when nothing can be done, should be summoned to our aid to sustain us while we wait. He seemed to himself shut out, and cast from the world again, as when he was a child, without hope, without an object in life; and he wept bitterly. No longer did he hunt or fish, but left it to his attendant to furnish him with food. Careless alike of comfort or appearance, he suffered his beard to grow, and scribbled complaining verses on birch bark, which he repeated to the winds; or he lay ingloriously in his cabin, and gazed for hours on the only remaining mementoes of the past which he prized—the ring and lock of hair.

But nature, like the strained bow, until the last frail chord

of the human instrument be broken, will improve every occasion to rebound; and while the strings are strong, she will at times, perforce, cast off her burdens. Thus it was with Warwick. When thought and feeling had been tense so long, as completely to exhaust him in the one direction, without an effort on his part, without his consciousness, the whole horizon of his griefs would vanish, and other forms and objects take their place. Then he reviewed his life, and sat in judgment, by what light he had, on his own acts. He sought all fields of thought, the earth, the sky, the life of man, his birth and destiny. Alternately he groped among the splendid mythological fables of the ancients, which, like the action of the sun on frost-work, too often warm the mind only to darken it with mists; or the chivalry and enchantments of the middle ages; or the simple but sublime revelations of Christianity.

Few bright, aspiring intellects escape the atmosphere of the schools without a tinge of infidelity. It is the beautiful province of the Deity, to develop light from darkness, truth from adversity: and now in his hopelessness and distress, it was the fortune of Warwick to become the recipient of the chief good of his being. In his undisturbed reflections, his last remaining doubts were swept away, and he believed. But we use the word in no sectarian sense. He became satisfied of an active, superintending Providence, as affirmed by his own consciousness, and taught both by nature and revelation. He realized fully, for the first time, that the Great World-Maker is about, that He is above all, the Father of all, and holds the destiny of all in his hands—that though one may seem to be forgotten and uncared for for a time, driven and driving helplessly among rocks and shoals and quicksands, it is so only in seeming and for wise ends. The Omnipotent eye can not lose sight of His children; the Omnipotent heart can not cease to throb warmly in their behalf: and though we see not the finger that so watchfully corrects the wild diver-

gencies we make, saving us frequent shipwrecks, the finger is no less there, and the unseen pilot ever at hand to set our barque, if it be not already wholly water-logged or rotten, afloat again upon the river of life.

The return of Alwyn from the Spanish camp formed the only breaks in the monotony of Warwick's existence; and the day and hour when the young savage finally arrived with an actual epistle from Michael Johnson for his master was considered an era, and worthy to be marked with a white stone. The missive was a curiosity in several respects. The material on which it was written was a film of birch bark, as smooth as parchment; and the characters were inscribed with a sort of iron-stone, or red chalk, in place of pen or stylus. Though somewhat antiquated in form, they were plain and legible: and what is equally noteworthy, were evidently the offspring of a frank and honest mind.

"I take my pen in hand," wrote Johnson, "or rather I should say my substitute for a pen (a thing I havn't done afore in many years, though in my younger days I was something given to writing), to inform you we are well: hoping, my dear boy, that these few lines will find you enjoying the same blessing. Things are every day growing stranger and stranger here, and I'm really at a loss to guess out the end. After you went away, we were considerable quiet for a time; but now Ferdinand has got well, and grumbles and carries on worse than ever. The work is almost at a stand-still, and the object we came here for forgotten: or, at any rate, the digging don't go on to any purpose. The men are uneasy and quarrelsome, as well as their masters: and I sometimes think things are shaping for a regular outbreak and rebellion.

"That dear child, the Lady Viola, is like a wilted lily. She cries and laughs by turns, but there is no comfort in her heart. If she could see you, my boy, I think 'twould do her more good than any thing else: but that can't be at present.

A few days ago she was improving; but since Ferdinand has got about, and is so stormy, she is worse again. I do what I can to cheer her up, and tell her, if worse comes to worse, there is a Power that will not forsake her.

"I'm almost certain that I do wrong in telling you these things. It will only make you feel bad, and do no good. But if you keep stout at heart, it won't hurt you. I don't really think Ferdinand will dare to come to blows; though it's certain he scatters money pretty freely among the men. He's a coward by nater, and stands in awe of Don Manuel. I shall keep a close watch of him, and guard our flower well: and so good-bye, my dear boy, and God bless you!"

But the novelty of this arrival was soon over; and our hero, with regret be it spoken, though on the whole in a better frame of mind, still indulged himself in dreamy fits of despondent inactivity; for which, as we can by no means escape the consequences of our acts, he was fated to suffer. One sultry afternoon, in the absence of his faithful shadow, Alwyn, as he lay musing under a tree near his hut, his wits all wool-gathering, he suddenly found himself in the hands of half a dozen savages: and before he could wake up to offer any effectual resistance, his arms were pinioned, and he perceived himself a prisoner.

Blank surprise, and chagrin that he had thus tamely delivered himself into the hands of his enemies, for the moment deprived him of the power of utterance. He looked at his captors. They were stout, supple fellows; and he imbibed no consolation from the fact that they were plainly chuckling with satisfaction over their bloodless victory. He recognized no countenance among them, but it was soon quite clear that he was known to them, and an object of their especial regard. They hurried him rapidly away. No sooner were they out of sight of his cabin, than they re-adjusted the fastenings on his arms, searched his person for concealed weapons,

and arranged themselves, one on each side, and two in front and rear, as the order of their further march. Perceiving that escape and resistance were equally hopeless, and judging from the aspect of the case that all parley would be worse than useless, with a swelling heart he suffered them to urge him on in silence.

The party reached the Susquehanna at a quick pace, and bearing up the right bank for several miles, ultimately emerged upon a cleared and cultivated plain, indicating the near proximity of an Indian settlement. Very shortly, on rising a slight eminence, Warwick found himself in the midst of a motley assemblage of women and children, who, vying with each other in the confusion of tongues which they produced, seemed very desirous to exhibit toward him some touching evidences of their regard. He was saved from the marks of their digits, however, by the care of his captors, who, by a show of resolution, seconded by occasional blows, succeeded in keeping the rabble at bay. The village was directly in advance: and with little delay the prisoner was conducted between rows of Indian huts to a log tenement which answered the purposes of a prison, where, bound hand and foot, he was left to his own reflections.

Warwick was now himself again. The equilibrium of his mind was restored: and this had been accomplished by the occurrence of a real calamity. The event taught him a valuable lesson, should he be so happy as to escape from captivity with his life, that he might profit by it. It taught him the difference between threatening and positive inflictions. His late griefs, in the main, had been prospective. His present one was real, and like enough to be fatal. The first had broken him down; the last had strengthened and restored him. Strange creatures are we. With the mass of mankind, imaginary evils, or those in the distance which may never reach them, are endured with less patience and firmness than

the blows and the burdens when they come. Better, far better is it, to trust the sorrows which frown on the horizon of the future to the mercy and care of Heaven, and content ourselves with the troubles, always enough, of the present.

The arrival of the prisoner in the settlement, as soon as it became fully known, seemed to answer as a signal to its inhabitants for the opening afresh of the flood-gates of their grief. The wails of women and children, for husbands and fathers and brothers, slain on the Delaware, mingled with cries for vengeance, filled the air: and Warwick had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that he was destined to furnish the first offering to appease the ghosts of the departed. They gathered round his prison, and clamored for his life: they beat the wooden walls with stones and sticks; and spit on them to show their hatred and disgust; while they called him the false friend, who had drank at their fountain and eaten of their bread, and then imbrued his hands in their blood. As the youth listened, though he shrunk with horror from their accusations, he was not paralyzed by the impending danger. Disposing himself to meet with calmness any fate to which Providence might assign him, he nerved every faculty of his mind to take advantage of any passing occurrence, or combination of circumstances, which might offer him a chance of liberation.

The Indian, Alwyn, at the time of the capture of his friend and master, was away scouring the forest for supplies. On his return to the lodge, his sharp eye at once detected marks of unfamiliar footsteps; and when he found that Warwick was no longer there, his bosom was filled with alarm. Running from one point to another, he soon completed his examination of the vicinage, and arranged his conclusions. His master was a prisoner. There was the spot where he had been surprised. The impression on the leaves where he had lain, the indentures in the mold, made by his elbows and his knees,

in the short but ineffectual struggle, were all plain enough to the savage: and from the different footprints he was even able to discover the number of the enemies that beset him. He rejoiced that there were no traces of blood; and without wasting time in vain lamentations, he set himself like a hound on the trail.

His zeal and activity enabled him to overtake the party, long before their arrival at the village; but as no opportunity offered to attempt the rescue of his master, he did not show himself. Alwyn was well aware that he had become an object of distrust to his people since he had deserted them; still he did not hesitate to march boldly into the Oquago village. Though its inhabitants were not of his particular tribe, he knew them well; and doubted not that the veneration in which they held the memory of his father, would secure him a safe, if not a friendly reception.

It was now twilight. The uproar had dwindled to a sort of calm—the loud lamentations and cries of rage had given place to a succession of subdued and mournful wails. The natives of both sexes were principally out of doors; and the women were lighting fires, preparatory to a night of jubilee. As they recognized Alwyn among them, some gazed sadly at him without speaking, others accosted him civilly, and a few scowled contemptuously; but none impeded his progress. He made his way without interruption to the lodge of the principal chief.

The Oquago received him kindly, invited him to enter, and set food before him. But when he found that the renegade son of Rollingbow was interested in the fate of his white captive, that his object was to intercede for his life, he refused to listen to him. He would not withdraw the hospitality he had tendered; and informed Alwyn that for the sake of his father he should be a welcome guest at his cabin; but he must remain silent on the subject of Captain Warwick.

The night, to a late hour, was given by the Indians to rejoicing. Alwyn perceived that he was an object of suspicion, and that his actions were closely watched. Nevertheless, both on that evening and the following day, he frequently approached the prison where his master was confined; but he was warned away by the guard, and failed to communicate with him. Neither was he more successful in his attempts to learn from the natives what were the intentions of the savages with respect to the final disposition to be made of their captive. Direct questions and stratagems were resorted to in vain. Every one was on his guard against him: and he could only draw his conclusions from what came under his immediate observation. These were all unfavorable: and his apprehensions were still increased by the arrival at the Oquago village of several neighboring and important chiefs of the Confederacy.

Chapter Forty-three.

POLITICAL POSITION OF THE SIX NATIONS. THE TRIAL. OLD CHARACTERS IN A NEW DRESS.

"Though justice be thy plea, consider this—
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation."

MEANTIME the hours passed heavily with Warwick. He was soon aware of the presence of one friend, the faithful Alwyn, whose voice he detected as the youth spoke to the sentinels. He also repeatedly caught sight of him through the chinks in his prison walls, on the second day: and though he could not speak with him, the consciousness that there was one heart nigh, though incased in the brown skin of an untutored Indian boy, that sympathized with him, was an unspeakable satisfaction. It was like a pleasant dew falling on a thirsty plain. As yet nothing had occurred to indicate the exact doom which awaited him. The sentinels, and those who came to him with food, were silent, moving figures. If he spoke to them, they paid no attention to it. No one came to visit him; and to his urgent and repeated requests for an interview with the head chief, no answer was returned. Still he felt composed, and ate and slept well.

Thus closed the second day; and notwithstanding the delay, somewhat unusual in the administration of the Indian code, the savages were by no means playing with their prisoner. The worst passions were aroused and busy among them, and the deferring of the sacrifice for a brief period was only designed to prolong their gratification, and at the same time

give an appearance of deliberation to their proceedings. It was well known to them that their captive was a British officer, and some little apprehension of the consequences of their acts would, in spite of them, obtrude itself on their counsels. He was also one whose name was familiar in the Confederacy. He had indeed achieved a certain degree of popularity with them, by the frankness of his character, as exhibited during the pendency of some important negotiations: and most of them knew him very well by report, and some of them had met with him in person. All these considerations seemed to advise them to an unusual circumspection in their proceedings.

But with the American Indian revenge of injuries is the master passion. Forgiveness of wrongs finds no place in his breast: and of mercy to an enemy he never dreams. Extermination of all foes is a part of his religion. It was the prime article in the creed of his fathers. He drew it in with his mother's milk. It formed the first chapter in the lessons of his childhood: and in manhood, without a doubt to embarrass him, he unshrinkingly practices upon it. Unsated vengeance preys on his mind like the fabled vampyre on the heart of its victim. He can not eat, he can not sleep, he can not rest, until the appetite of the demon within him is slaked. And still the Indian is a faithful friend.

But though the Indian character were different—though the soft breath of mercy had fallen on the sons of the wilderness like melting rain, what good reason had Warwick to hope for an acquittal at their hands, viewed as he was by them in the light of a false friend and insidious traitor? He had partaken of their hospitality; he had influenced them to spare their enemy, until that enemy had made himself strong with defenses; and then had joined that enemy and imbrued his own hands in their blood. Many widows were mourning for their lords: and if the Indians burned with hostility toward the

Spaniards, they were consumed with a double fire in their hatred of him who had betrayed them, and been the efficient cause, as they believed, of their late most disastrous and bloody defeat.

To fan these feelings into an intensity still more vivid were the emissaries of the rival power of Great Britain on the American Continent, already present, as they were everywhere; and who, sometimes Frenchmen in the disguise of savages, and sometimes Indians paid for the service, were ever busy and on the alert to sow disaffection, and foment ill-blood between the natives and the Colonies of England. Accordingly, to the partisans and emissaries of France, the present occasion was an important one. The deliberate putting to death of a British officer by the Six Nations might be converted into a firebrand, which would hardly fail to kindle a conflagration. On it might hinge the most vital results—a break with the whole North American tribes, and the downfall of the threatened British supremacy in the New World.

The most active and influential agent of the French interest, who presented himself at the Oquago village, at this time, was an old man, an Indian or a half-breed, in a mixed dress of aboriginal and European trappings, who was called Sir John. He rested not a moment; he mingled in their councils; he conversed separately with their chiefs and warriors, and brought to bear every cunning appliance known to the most expert politician, to stimulate their fury, to swell their pride, and remove any incipient doubt or apprehension which might find a momentary lodgment in their minds.

Contrary to the advice of Sir John, the chiefs determined to concede to the prisoner a form of trial; and the third day of his captivity was set apart for the proceedings. These were to be in public, that the justice of his condemnation might be manifest to all; and that nothing might be wanting in the fairness of the procedure, should they be called on to

account for their acts by their British allies, he was to be present, and to be allowed the privilege of a defense.

The third day came. At about 10 o'clock Warwick was led forth. The manacles were removed from his legs, to permit him some freedom of motion; but he was surrounded by a strong guard, and two stalwart savages held him by the arms. In this manner he was conducted to an open space in the center of the village, where, beneath the spreading branches of a magnificent butternut tree, was a leveled and slightly elevated plain or clayed floor, ordinarily devoted to purposes of council. To the trunk of this tree he was firmly bound; but in such a manner as to allow him to move, and to give him no unnecessary annoyance: and around him, in a circle, the savages proceeded to seat themselves on the ground.

The Oquago, a grave and venerable chief, presided at the solemn inquest which ensued. He occupied the central point in the inner range, nearest the prisoner; and on either side of him were seated those dignitaries, according to rank, whom age, prowess, or the reputation of wisdom entitled to act the part of accusers and judges. Behind these were the warriors or braves; and beyond still were the young men, the women, and the children; a mixed multitude, but all, as would appear, occupying places according to a certain order of precedence. They were decked in their gaudiest trappings; the braves were fully armed, and besmeared with paint, until they had transformed themselves into every possible image of terror.

When all were seated, a grave silence of a few minutes ensued, during which Warwick surveyed, with some anxiety and minuteness, the assemblage before him. Alwyn was nowhere to be seen. There were faces there, however, which he recognized; but from no countenance could he gather hope. All was stolid indifference, or worse. The old men sat at their ease, immovable, and to appearance as unimpassioned as statues; while the eyes of the younger portion, as they met

his, gleamed on him with the ferocity of tigers. No sympathy was there. He might as soon think to melt the rocks with a tear, as to move those creatures with sentiments of compassion. Still Warwick yielded not to despair. He quailed not before his foes. He nerved himself bravely to his fate, and sent his thoughts upward, and felt that if all the world had deserted him, there was still One who was his Father and his Friend.

At length the Oquago arose, and in a brief and temperate speech gave a statement of the facts in the case. Of him and what he said, the American felt he had little right to complain. He spoke of Great Britain as the ancient ally of the Six Nations ; of their father across the great water, the King of England, in terms of affectionate regard ; of the unity and good faith which had generally subsisted between them, and which had now been unfortunately outraged by a British subject. He spoke of the prisoner as one who had enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the Confederacy, but who had abused both, and turned the confidence they reposed in him to their destruction. In the narration which he gave to support this charge, the speaker was careful not to go beyond the facts, as he understood them. He formally absolved England and the Colonies from all participation in the acts of the prisoner, spoke of the strong desire of the Indians to be at peace, and continue to maintain harmonious relations with their white neighbors ; and concluded by saying that it was obviously best for all that he who had undertaken to disturb those relations should perish, that no cause of dissatisfaction might remain.

The old chief was followed by a professed orator, who gave at length and in detail a most vivid history of every circumstance which could be brought to bear against the prisoner. He commenced with the appearance of the Spaniards in the Indian country, people of a dark white race, neither English nor French, who had come in an armed body among them, no

one knew for what; who had killed their deer, trampled down their corn, and insulted their women and braves. He narrated particularly the first overt act of hostility on the part of these men, which resulted in the capture of Don Ferdinand. He spoke of the interference of the prisoner in the Spaniard's behalf; described in burning words the subsequent unprovoked murder of Helmo, and the just and deep indignation of the Indians which followed. He pictured in glowing colors their preparations for revenge; the treachery of Warwick, his flight to the Spanish camp, and its consequences. He delineated with consummate skill the attack, planned and led on by Rollingbow, the Onondaga, and pointed out the cause of its failure, as he shook his long finger at the prisoner. He described, like a master of his art, the several successive assaults; and closed with a representation, too vivid for aught but reality, of the horrors of that dreadful night, which witnessed the death of Rollingbow, and the slaughter of fifty of their bravest warriors.

While this eloquent declaimer was on his feet, the whole audience, moved by his descriptions and appeals, and fascinated by the melody and grace of his voice and gestures, hung entranced and breathless on his lips. As he closed, they seemed to gasp for breath; and turning slowly from the speaker to the prisoner, they began to sway to and fro like a heavy wave, and in an instant a hundred voices broke upon the air:

"Let him die! Let him be burned!" they shouted.

But this disorderly proceeding was at once checked by the Oquago; and another orator arose. He spoke fluently and well. All his attitudes and motions were easy and natural; but his matter was only a new combination of what had already been said.

The fourth speaker, as a branch of his argument, enforced the necessity of the immediate expulsion of the whole Spanish

party from the Indian territory, or their entire extermination. The prisoner he considered the enemy's right arm, which, all else aside, they were bound to lop off in self-defense.

The part of the prosecution seemed here to have come to a close; and the Oquago again arose, and notified the prisoner, that, if he had any thing to say, he would now be heard. Not that he considered a lenity of this nature at all necessary to the administration of justice; but he had understood that such was the custom of the whites; and in the trial of a white, especially one of the prisoner's rank, he was willing that every right which his own laws secured should be extended to him, that all the world might see that he was justly condemned, and equally by English as by Indian justice.

Futile, as it was evident, any attempt at a justification of himself must be, the love of life—and oh, how strong it is, and should be, with the young!—impelled Warwick at once to accept the proffered favor. At this terrible and hopeless hour he felt it an imperative necessity and duty not to give way, but to struggle on, and defend to the utmost that boon of existence which God had given him. But with what words should he address his judges? How could he explain the complicated circumstances and motives which had influenced his acts, in such a way as to render them intelligible to savages? And yet he felt that he had done nothing worthy of death; that he was an innocent man.

Warwick was sufficiently acquainted with the Indian tongue to understand most of what had been said, and to render himself intelligible in reply. He requested that the cords which bound his arms might be loosed, that he might speak with more freedom, and it was granted. He then proceeded to ask their attention to what he was about to say in his defense—not in denial of the specific acts which had been charged upon him; those he acknowledged he had committed: nor yet to solicit their compassion, for he was not afraid to die.

What he had to say would be in explanation of those acts: when he should leave it to the great Confederacy of the Six Nations, the chiefs and warriors there present, to do him justice.

He denied that he had been a traitor to them. He was their friend: he had been their friend from the beginning: but it was to his own household that a man and a warrior owed his first duty. The Spaniards were of his own blood: among them were those, as it were, of his own family; whom he loved and felt bound to protect, as a man should love and protect his father, or his mother, or the wife of his bosom.

"In entering the Indian country," continued the prisoner, "these strangers intended you no harm. They wished to be at peace with you; and to make sure of a good understanding, I came among you in advance. But as you all do know, in every wood there is a crooked tree—in every tribe there is one violent man. My Spanish friends are no exception to this general law. Among them is the chevalier Don Ferdinand de Cassino. You know him: he was once your prisoner, as I am now. I induced you to set him free. Perhaps I was wrong in that. My excuse is, that I then did not understand him as I do now. I have no doubt that he murdered the guide that was sent to conduct him back to his friends. He has since attempted my life. He is my most deadly foe. He is the foe of Don Manuel Torrillo, the Spanish chief. He is the enemy of us all: and he it is who is responsible for all the bloodshed and trouble which has ensued.

"When poor Helmo was murdered, I asked the noble Rolingbow to let vengeance sleep, if but for a day, that I might go to the Spanish chief and have justice done without further bloodshed or war. But the hot blood of the warrior was up. He refused to hear me. He armed his braves, and invited you all to join him in seeking revenge. At such a

time what ought I to have done? I loved my Indian friends: I loved my own brothers. For the guilt of Ferdinand of Cassino should I leave my innocent ones to perish? Under such circumstances what would you have done? Would you have forsaken your own blood? No—no! You, noble men and chiefs who are my judges, understand the duty of a warrior better. I did as you would do. I flew to the aid of those so dear to me. I fought for them, I defended them, even against my friends. If for this I am deserving of death, in the name of the Great Spirit, who is equally the God of the white men and the red men, execute it upon me!"

As Warwick ceased speaking, he could not but watch the effect of his words with an interest most intense. The boldness of his defense had evidently taken his auditors by surprise. He had made an impression; but, alas! too faint a one to avail him. The slight murmur of approbation died away; the look of admiration faded: and all again was cold and still. At this crisis the young Indian, Alwyn, pale, haggard, and breathless, burst through the crowd into the open space in the center, and threw himself at the feet of the Oquago. His object was at once comprehended; and several of the braves, as they arose to seize him, taunted him to his face.

"His father was a great chief," said they, "but he has the soul of a woman. He is fit only to serve the white man."

The young savage indignantly regained his feet. His eyes flashed fire and his breast heaved with emotion.

"Hear me!" he shouted in a clear and commanding voice, which startled and awed his listeners. "Ye call me a woman. Was Rollingbow a greater warrior than you? His blood runs here!" extending at the same time his slight but muscular arm. "Did you love my father? Then why forget what this Yengee did to save him when he perished? Ah! but the Yengee fought against us! Well, he fought for his

brothers: he fought to save his white bird—the joy of his bosom, the hope of his life. Can ye not remember? Have ye forgotten that he gave us back many prisoners unhurt; and our dead to bury?"

"Boy!" sternly interrupted Sir John, suddenly springing to his feet: "Your sires have listened patiently. Will you give way to men? There has been talking enough. It is now time to act. Women and children cry when warriors' hearts are strong. The blood of our brothers is not yet avenged. Their spirits are angry at the delay. They must be appeased. The prisoner must die. Here are his weapons still red with the blood of our brothers and sons. Let them be washed in the pale water of his heart. Then will the ghosts of our kindred be at rest."

The speaker held extended in his hand the sword and rifle which belonged to Warwick. Several braves sprung forward to receive them: but before they could execute the hellish purpose he had indicated, there was a sudden tumult: and a tall, gaunt figure, with the strides of a Hercules, overturning some, and thrusting others from his path, suddenly appeared in their midst, and sprung like an enraged tiger upon Sir John. The unexpected apparition was none other than Michael Johnson. Seizing his victim by the throat, he gazed a moment into his face, as though to make sure of his identity, and threw him on the ground with a force which deprived him of sensation.

All was at once confusion and alarm. The women shrieked; the men sprung to their feet; and a hundred knives were flashing at the instant in a hundred hands. Those near Johnson attempted to seize or disable him, but he, with astonishing agility and strength, threw them from him, and avoided their blows; until, having cleared a small space, he caused his ever ready rifle to play around him in a circle, and with such a velocity as to force them back and keep them at bay.

"Stand off, my men!" he thundered. "I come as a friend and a brother. Have any of you ever heard of the White Eagle of the Mohawks? Look on him again!"

Thus saying he threw open his vest, and exposed to their view the figure of an eagle, and the symbol of his tribe, imperishably punctured in his skin. The sign was acknowledged: the uplifted weapons fell: and Wisset, the young chief of the Mohawks, and a son of the brave old Hendrick, Johnson's ancient friend, immediately came forward and gave him his hand. Others pressed in to follow his example: but the attention of the White Eagle had already reverted to another object. He was gazing at the still insensible Indian at his feet.

"Is that John the Wild Cat?" said he.

"That is the Wild Cat," replied the Mohawk.

Johnson knelt down beside him.

"I have been too fast," said he. "John must not die yet."

He placed his hand on the Wild Cat's heart. He shrieked in his ear: he called for water, and bathed his face and neck. At length the Indian gasped: but reviving animation seemed slow and uncertain. Age, if it had not cooled his passions, had chilled the current of his veins; and some time elapsed, made up of moments of terrible suspense to Johnson, before he was sufficiently recovered to speak.

"Do you know me?" shouted Johnson.

"I do," faintly articulated the Indian.

"Then tell me what became of my child. Does he live?"

The Wild Cat made an ineffectual effort to reply. Johnson bent over his dreadful enemy, his eyes almost starting from their sockets, his face pale as that of his expiring foe; but every nerve and every muscle strained to their utmost tension by the grasping despairing agony of his mind. He placed his ear to the Wild Cat's lips.

"He lives," breathed the savage in a whisper.

"He lives!" shrieked Johnson, springing to his feet. "My Paul lives! Tell me where, and I forgive you all!"

The dying Indian made a convulsive motion, and his last, in the direction of the prisoner. But, by this time, memory was busy with Warwick, remolding the shadowy images of his infancy.

"My father!" he exclaimed. Johnson sprung forward, and the old man of many troubles, who had never fainted before, fell insensible on the bosom of his manacled son.

Chapter Forty-four.

THE FATHER AND SON. CLOUDS BREAKING AND THE PRIZE IN VIEW.

"All is best, though we oft doubt
What the unsearchable dispose
Of highest Wisdom brings about."

THE Indians were by no means indifferent spectators of the incidents last recorded. Their sympathies were aroused; a brief consultation was held by the principal chiefs; when Wisset, the Mohawk, addressed the softened multitude.

He alluded to the solemn and extraordinary events which had just transpired before their eyes; and proceeded to explain to them some things necessary to a proper understanding of them. He recalled to their minds the services of the White Eagle, rendered to the Nations many years before; which were of such a character as to elevate him by general consent, though a pale face, to the dignity of a chief. He recurred to the loss of his child also, many years before, while yet a mere infant, through the mad revenge of John the Wild Cat; and to the great efforts that were made, but in vain, for the lad's recovery. He recalled to their recollection the fact, that the Wild Cat had fled, at the time, an outlaw from the Confederacy: and that he had never returned among them, until of late; when he was only tolerated in his character of an envoy of the French; and that the claim he had set up of still being a subject of the Nations was impudent and false.

Finally the speaker, with the voice and bearing of a

prophet, declared that the hand of the Great Spirit was evidently working among them. The appearance of the White Eagle on the scene, after many years of absence; and his discovery of his son just at the moment when the youth was about to suffer death for crimes which it now seemed probable others had committed; and the mysterious end of the Wild Cat, now lying dead before them, as though struck by a bolt from heaven, were a sufficient indication of the wishes of their Great Father. His children would submit. "Let the prisoner's bands be cut," said he, "and let us all rejoice with the old chief who has found his son."

This happy termination to the exciting incidents of the day was received with general applause. Some few grumbled, but their murmurs were drowned in the enthusiastic shout of satisfaction which broke upon the air, as a seal to the verdict of their chiefs; and which restored the unconscious Johnson to himself. With trembling hands he assisted to unbind his son; and Warwick again stood forth, under the beautiful sky, and stretched his tortured limbs in freedom. He had found his father—not, it is true, in the most elevated sphere of life, according to the world's esteem; but he was satisfied. He could not wish it otherwise. He already loved the old man deeply; and he felt prouder of his sire as he was, plain Michael Johnson, one on whom God, and not men, had set the stamp of greatness, than though he had found him clothed in gold and purple. And Lucy too, that Lucy—the pure and innocent being over whose sorrows and early fate he had wept—yes, that Lucy, still the old man's dream of hope, was his mother.

With many turbulent demonstrations of pleasure, the father and son were conducted by the savages to a separate lodge, where, food having been set before them, with an unusual delicacy of appreciation, they were left to themselves. But both were too full for speech; and clasping each other's hands

they communed long in silence. At length, sinking on his knees, his son beside him, the veteran gave modest thanks to the Supreme Ruler of events for the great good with which his age was blessed.

The presence of Johnson at the Oquago village, so opportune for the safety of Warwick, as the reader has doubtless surmised, was owing to the active sagacity of the young Indian Alwyn. Failing to make any impression on his people, and perceiving by the note of preparation that they were determined on a sacrifice, he hastened to the Spanish camp. His whistle from a brake near the fort brought Johnson immediately to his side. But what could be done? How was Warwick to be saved? The whole Spanish forces, were they at the veteran's command, would hardly suffice to rescue him. And in what condition were these forces? Just on the eve, as the old man plainly foresaw, of an outbreak among themselves; and a large majority of them already secured by Don Ferdinand de Cassino, Warwick's implacable foe, to do his bidding. But the youth must not be left to perish without an effort for his salvation; and trusting to the omnipotent God, rather than his own strength, Johnson accompanied Alwyn to the Oquago settlement. The result we have already seen.

Meanwhile, with the father and son, time flew by on uncounted hours. As soon as they had gratified each other with the more important incidents of their own personal histories, their thoughts naturally reverted to their friends in the Spanish camp.

"I hardly know what answers to give you," said Johnson, in reply to several hurried questions on the part of Warwick. "Things are bad enough, sartainly; and I fear our help will be needed quite as soon as we can find it convenient to get there."

"What, to repel violence?" said Warwick.

"Quite likely," returned the old hunter. "Don Ferdinand is getting more outrageous every day; and Don Manuel has altered his hand too. He has made up his mind, at last, that the Lady Viola, sweet thing! shan't be sacrificed body and soul; and the chevalier knows it pretty well, too."

"And what is likely to be the result of a struggle between them?" inquired Warwick, anxiously.

"God only knows," returned Johnson. "It was but yesterday that Don Manuel inquired of me about you—havin' a vague suspicion, he said, that you were not far away. It is sartain in my mind, if he had help enough to back him, that he would'nt dally an hour longer with Ferdinand. He would settle accounts with him in a hurry, I guess."

"Did you infer," said Warwick, in some trepidation, "that he would be glad of my presence in the camp in this approaching crisis?"

"He said so in so many words, my boy," returned the veteran.

"I will soon be there then," said Warwick. "Let us lose no time in giving him the benefit of our counsel and our strength."

"Not too fast, my boy," said the old man. "We are but four hands when we get there; or six, at the outside, counting the child Alwyn. But here am I, by God's blessing, among friends; and I've thought of proposin' to them to give us a trifle of help. A hundred or two of copper-skins at our back would quite cheer us up in payin' our respects to Don Ferdinand."

This suggestion, of course, met with the hearty approval of Warwick. Johnson, however, informed him that he would be obliged to school his patience a little, as he perceived by the noise that the Indians were getting up a powwow for the night, and it would be useless to broach the subject to them until that should be brought to a close. Warwick then

proceeded to inquire more particularly after the welfare of the Lady Viola.

"Poor thing!" said Johnson, in reply, "she is bad enough; and still she keeps up as well as could possibly be expected under the circumstances. Her father is gettin' almost distracted about her: and it was that, I guess, that drove him to consult me so freely yesterday. First he spoke of Don Ferdinand's rascally conduct in tampering with his servants and followers. He said that he himself was now poor; and that though he had received many tokens of attachment from his dependents, they were still human; and not, he feared, above the corrupting influence of deceitful promises and gold.

"Don Manuel Torrillo," continued the veteran, "is now a very different man from what he was when I first knew him. His troubles, and this about Viola more than any thing else, have broken him down. I saw, yesterday in particular, that his spirits were all gone; and that he was almost ready to give up in despair. His eyes looked wild-like; he would make sudden starts; and his lips quivered when he stopped talkin'. 'Look at my child!' he said. 'She is almost dead—daily pining away before my eyes—and all from her horror of Ferdinand. Wretch that I am! to have made such engagements for her before she was out of her cradle. This affiancing of infants I find to be an unnatural proceedin'. And still it might all have turned out well enough, but for the sensitiveness of Viola's nater, and the brutality of Ferdinand's. But oh, my God! to think that the man should turn out a murderer! the one I had loved and intended for my son. Whether Ambrose was insane or not, is no longer of importance to the great question. I have decided that. He shall never wed my sweet child. I will sacrifice every thing to save her from him—life, or even what the world calls honor. But should I perish, oh, God! what will become of her?'

"I did what I could," continued Johnson, "to comfort Don

Manuel, and assured him that so long as I remained alive, the Lady Viola should not lack an arm to defend her: and that I thought there was another still, worth a dozen of me, who would rejoice to place himself by her side, and take his chances against Don Ferdinand, or any body else that might offer. He thanked me, and taking me by the hand, very solemnly, as though it was his last act, committed his daughter to my care. 'A black cloud is over me,' said he, 'which I find it impossible to dispel. I fear me this inhospitable wild, even this mountain, is destined to furnish me with my last place of rest—that here the career of Don Manuel Torrillo is to end. For myself I care not. I am too much of a philosopher, and, I hope, Christian, to mourn over a few short days at the latter end of life. But Viola is young. The world is all before her yet, untasted. It is hard for her to die. But better thus, even, than a heart-broken wife, consumin' by inches. Kind Father in Heaven, protect her!'

"I pitied Don Manuel from the bottom of my heart," continued the old man, "and tried my best to drive away the gloomy apprehensions which had got possession of his mind. I told him to trust in Heaven, and to hope. I told him the decision he had come to with respect to the Lady Viola and Don Ferdinand was, without doubt, correct: for, accordin' to my notion of things, Charles, the agreement is one which he hasn't the natral right to fulfill. If it's sinful to break a contract, it's more sinful still to violate the born rights of a child, and compel her ag'in nater and reason to marry a man she hates. This I told him; and advised him still to temporize with the chevalier a little longer, if possible, hopin' that some thing might turn up, meanwhile, in our favor. It was then he gave me liberty to consult with you, my dear boy; and bade me say to you, that your help would be very acceptable in his present strait; and that, with Heaven's blessing, Viola should be your reward."

Chapter Forty-five.

AN ADOPTION. INDIAN FESTIVITIES, AN ABORIGINAL SUPPER AND BALL. COXCOMBS AND COQUETTES. THE WAR PARTY.

"Lo, the poor Indian!"

THE sun was already low in the west, when Johnson and Warwick emerged from the lodge. On gaining the air, almost the first object that met their eyes was Alwyn, sitting apart on a log, and taking no note of what was passing around him. As they approached, he looked up sadly, and Warwick perceived traces of tears on his face.

"I had not forgotten you, Alwyn," said Warwick, kindly; "and I must now thank you for all you have done in saving my life this day. But what is the matter, boy?"

"I know not," returned the youth.

"Why then do you weep, when I am full of joy? My life is given back to me, Alwyn; and you have been an important instrument in saving it. Had I been burned, you would have wept then; would you not?"

"I would have been burned too," said the youth.

"My brother!" said Warwick, taking his hand; "you are worthy of all my love. How strong has been your affection for me, manifested in a hundred different ways! But, Alwyn, I have found my father, whom I have not seen since I was a little slip, not much higher than your knee. Do you not rejoice with me?"

"The Great Spirit, who sees here," said Alwyn, laying his hand on his breast, "alone knows how sincerely. Rolling-

bow, too, was a chief; but where is he? Gone!" continued the youth, pointing to the sky; "but the White Eagle has come back."

Warwick was deeply moved.

"The White Eagle shall be your father also," said he; "and I will be your elder brother. We will never forsake you, Alwyn. You shall remain with us always, if you wish; and all I have I will share with you."

"It shall be so," said Johnson, elevating himself with a feeling of paternal pride. "Rise up, my brave boy!"

Alwyn arose, and the old man placed his hand on the youth's head.

"Henceforth," said he, solemnly, "thou art my son—the same in all respects as though begotten of my body. And God ratify and bless the adoption; and thee, too, Alwyn!"

A flush of sunshine came over the face of the young Indian. He took the White Eagle's hand reverently in his and kissed it. Then embracing Warwick with a more familiar joy, the three took their way toward the center of the village.

"I must show my two boys to my friends," said Johnson, as he walked with the pride and dignity of a father between them. "But, Warwick, the ancient butternut, it seems to me, wears now a much pleasanter look than it did a few hours ago."

Indeed, around the same tree which had so lately witnessed the jeopardy of Warwick and the death of Wild Cat, preparations had already been made for a grand feast in honor of the White Eagle. The chiefs and the warriors, with the entire population of the place, were there assembled, and received the old man with every token of honor and respect. Like attentions were extended to him who had so nearly been their victim, against whom they no longer seemed to entertain a shadow of ill-will; and also to the young Indian, Al-

wyn, as soon as they became aware that the White Eagle had adopted him.

The festivities which succeeded were of a wild and striking character. The viands, though boasting no variety to compare with the saloons of the Irving or Astor, were abundant, and prepared with a commendable attention to neatness. Venison, fish, the abundant produce of the Susquehanna, not omitting the delicious shad, then plenty in its upper waters; bear's meat, and the national dish, the succotash, with maize or corn cakes, baked on the coals, formed the principal staples of the feast. To these may be added, from the catalogue of minor dishes, roasted corn, beans, squashes, apples, blackberries, and other wild fruits of the season. These were served in vessels of native manufacture, made of burned clay, or curiously fashioned from the knotty excrescences of trees. The guests, as a mark of honor, and also to show that the Six Nations were not ignorant of European customs, were furnished with English knives; and wooden spoons, carved out of a species of the box, and pronged sticks, to answer in place of that indispensable appendage to civilization, called a fork. The savages, however, dispensed with this latter luxury, greatly preferring those ancient instruments, the fingers, for the transfer of their food. This they bolted with great dexterity, and devoured ravenously, sundering the tough portions, meanwhile, with that knife of all work which the Indian has ever at hand, suspended in a leather case by his side.

The dishes were arranged in a circle on the ground, and around them, facing to a common center, sat the company on bear-skins and rush-mats. There was perhaps in this primitive display, the table, the furniture, or the fare, or even in the picturesque assembly of the sons of the forest, with their women and children, crouched on the ground, little to attract the admiration of an epicure; and still the viands were not unsavory; while the hospitality with which they were prof-

fered, and the high good feeling which reigned around the board, were an ample compensation to a hungry man for the absence of porcelain or silver, and Parisian cookery.

As day was rushing beneath the western hills, and in pity to the world she was leaving, threw some of her rays behind, flooding the sky with rose, with orange, and with purple light, the savage feast was brought to a close, and the ground was cleared for the dancers. At the tap of a drum, twenty bonfires, and a multitude of torches elevated on poles, and attached to the branches of the wide-spreading butternut, burst into a blaze, and lighted up this natural ball-room as brilliantly as the thousand burners illuminate the artificial magnificence of Metropolitan Hall. The warriors, the wives, the young men and maidens, now appeared on the scene in all their glory. The strong light showed their fine persons, their graceful movements, and their wild, aboriginal bedeckments to the best advantage: and a scene of rough revelry, of boisterous enjoyment ensued, which defies description.

The dress of the Indian females was various. Already were the fashions of the whites, especially as to material, making serious inroads upon them. Some there were, however, who pertinaciously resisted innovation, and still adhered substantially to the costume of their fathers. These wore a sort of deer-skin petticoat, the choicest made of the skin of the doe, white, and worked to the softness of velvet, which extended from the throat to the knees. It was without sleeves, set close at the waist, and was confined on the bosom with brooches; while the bust and skirt were heavily embroidered with stained porcupine quills and bead-work. The legs were encased in a similar leather, made to fit close, with wide, projecting hems or edgings, up and down the outside, and was also richly ornamented. On the feet were the beautifully wrought moccasins, which are too well known to need description. On the border of the skirt, the hems of the

leggings, and the flaps of the moccasins, were hanging small tin and silver pendents, which, as the wearer moved about in the dance, gave out a sound like that of little bells. The arms were circled with bracelets of silver or brass. The long, jetty hair was confined with hoops of silver or ribbons of wampum; and from both ears and nose hung jewels of sea shells or silver. A round spot of some brilliant color, the size of a large rose-leaf, occupied the center of the forehead: and thus the costume of the Indian damsel was complete.

Some indeed there were, light-hearted maidens, fond of show and foreign gauds, who preferred the calicoes and blue and crimson broadcloths of the English to the leather robes of their country. With these the particolored cotton petticoat and red or blue leggings took the place of the native article. But such derelictions were by no means countenanced by the staid fathers and mothers of the tribes; and those who indulged in them were frequently subjected to the rebukes of their elders, and were regarded as frivolous, unpromising maidens, who had departed from the simplicity of their people.

The costume of the males was of a less showy and more imposing kind, as befitted them. They were naked to the waist, round which was girded with a belt a blanket of skins or cloth, calculated, when comfort required, to be drawn over the shoulders. The white woolen robe, known to commerce by the name of the Indian blanket, was already common among them: its cheapness, and superiority, in many respects, over the skins of the deer, bear, and moose having rendered its introduction rapid. From the waist hung a garment which extended in a front and rear flap nearly to the knees. Leggings and moccasins, similar to those already mentioned, but plainer in workmanship and more substantial in material, completed the attire proper of the Indian. Not so, however,

with the ornamental part of his toilet. Ordinarily he wore his hair, which was as black as the wing of a raven, and never curled, long, and braided and coiled on the top or back of the head. It was there confined with a string or circlet of metal. From his ears and nose hung pendents: but the impressive characteristic in the appearance of the American Indian, and that on which he most prided himself, was the manner in which he was colored. Without a due attention to his person in this particular, he would not go on a war-party or attend a fête; and accordingly this sort of embellishment became with him a part of the serious business of his life.

The colors originally found with the natives were the products of plants and some few earths. After their acquaintance with the whites, some of our ordinary paints, such as ochre, vermilion, and red lead, were substituted. The hues must needs be brilliant, and then the Indian was satisfied. He laid them on thickly, in spots and stripes, over his face and the upper part of his body, apparently without much order, but certainly not without effect. When he had thus completed his toilet, to a civilized eye he was, perhaps, the most frightful object in nature. But among the savages themselves, and especially the softer sex, this kind of decoration was considered vastly becoming: and during the festivities we are describing, the dark damsels criticised with great freedom and relish, the taste and skill exhibited by the different braves in this sort of embellishment.

But among the males, as with the females, there were those who differed materially in their appearance from the rest. These were the coxcombs; and where is the nation or people or tribe among whom they are not to be found? The Indian coxcomb, as in civilized countries, gratified his passion for notoriety and display by carrying existing fashions to an extreme, by the introduction of new ones, and by

taking on himself airs of effeminate delicacy or offensive superiority. He wore larger pendents and brooches than his fellows. He applied the paint in broader stripes, and carried them a couple of inches lower on his body, than strict propriety, according to the notions of his people, would warrant. He shaved his head, all but a small tuft on the crown, which he bound up, and taught to sustain itself erect, and used as a support to a multitude of gaudy feathers, plucked from all the birds of the forest. He cut his ears into strings, in the same manner that a round bit of leather may be cut into a continuous thong: and when thus prepared, the organ was made to assume the form of a hoop, wound with brass or silver wire, and hung with tinsel and jewels, until it depended in an oblong circle on the shoulder.

The dances were of a very anomalous character. They were performed to the music of rude drums, beaten with a single stick, and supported by the voices of the dancers. Old and young, male and female, partook with equal spirit; but the two sexes did not mingle. The ball was opened by the males, who occupied the capacious smooth clayed floor for a time, and then gave place to the females: and thus they alternated through the evening. Johnson led off in the first set, accompanied by the venerable Oquago, and the principal chiefs: and at a later period, Warwick himself found it prudent to unite in the exercise, and to hop, leap, and sing as vigorously as the rest.

The evolutions consisted of a variety of rapid lively movements, sometimes assuming the shape of a regular figure; but more generally that of a mere helter-skelter commingling, and an expert management of the person, as they skipped and jumped and threaded their seemingly inextricable way among each other, over the dancing-ground. Occasionally, however, the complement on the floor would divide into two parties; and, taking their stations at opposite sides, as the drums

struck up, would move forward diagonally to the right, a certain number of steps, and then to the left, in the same manner; until the two divisions, coming together, would mingle and pass entirely through each other: when, turning, they would retrace their steps in the same zig-zag fashion to their first positions. Large numbers were engaged in this manner at once; they moved actively and quick; and as they met, it seemed quite impossible but that a scene of tangled confusion should ensue; still no two came in contact; and they emerged from their involved labyrinth in perfect order. All the dances were performed with the utmost exactness to time.

Notwithstanding some unquiet thoughts preying on his mind, Warwick could not but become interested in this wild revel. The magnificent ball-room; its floor the earth, and its ceiling the firmament set with stars; between, a hanging of green leaves, with torches and blazing bonfires for lamps; the tall, lithe Indians, in their showy trappings, treading the ground with the ease and dignity of monarchs; the native women, with fine forms and features, and black flashing eyes, tripping vigorously, but not ungracefully, through the mazes of the dance; the music of the drums and the rich, mellow voices of the singers, as they rose high on the wind or sunk away in soft cadences, formed indeed a picture likely to leave its impression on the mental tablet forever. Outside the dancers sat the chiefs and elders of the people, their brows unbent, their prerogatives for the time forgotten, telling stories to their grandchildren, of the war and the hunt, and the loves of their youth. The laugh, the joke, the song, were unrestrained; and no one witnessing the life and freedom and chatter of this festival would have said thereafter that the Indian is necessarily taciturn and grave.

As the interest in the fête began a little to flag, Michael Johnson, who rarely lost sight of the proper moment for

action, drew several of the chiefs together, and unfolded to them his wishes. He informed them of the present posture of affairs at the Spanish camp; of the defection of Don Ferdinand, and its probable consequences to himself, and the son they had that day given to his arms. He showed them that in the success of the plot of the chevalier they themselves had something to fear, inasmuch as the lawlessness of his character was a very safe warrant for further outrages upon them at his hands. On the other side, he pledged himself that if the authority of Don Manuel should be sustained, the Spanish party should at once peacefully evacuate the Indian country. He asked for a body of Indian warriors, sufficient to overawe the designs of Don Ferdinand, or to crush them, in case of resistance.

The proposition of the White Eagle was variously received. Some remained sedately silent; others suggested that it might be well to leave their enemies to cut each other's throats, if the White Eagle and his son could be prevailed on not to involve themselves in the catastrophe. But there were others still, and among them were the Oquago and the Mohawk Wisset, who perceived, in addition to their desire to oblige an old friend, a sound policy for themselves in complying with the request. They were anxious to rid the Confederacy of their troublesome visitors, and they saw no cheaper or more expeditious way of accomplishing it than the one proposed.

But it is unnecessary to pursue the negotiation further. Suffice it that it was successful. The Oquago, by an alarm beat on the drums, arrested the feet of the dancers. The Mohawk explained the object of the interruption, and called for volunteers, whom he offered to lead in person against the Spanish camp. The proposal was received with shouts of satisfaction, and ratified by acclamation, and the festivities of the night were brought to a close with the terrible war-

dance. The morn was just breaking, when Michael Johnson, Warwick, and the Mohawk, at the head of a stout body of warriors, comprising the effective force present on the occasion, marched out of the Oquago village, and turned south down the valley of the Susquehanna.

Chapter Forty-six.

INDIAN LOVE OF COUNTRY. THE MOHAWK. THE MARCH.

"A thousand years we thus have lived the monarchs of the wild,
The sun and all the orbs of night have circled o'er and smiled;
And ever from those silent lights the Spirit-Eye so good,
Keeps watch of his red children through the branches of the wood."

THE course of the war-party lay along the rich and umbrageous shore of the Susquehanna, whose banks never want for foliage and flowers, or scenery for variety and beauty. To the Indian, every foot of the ground was sacred—each vale, and cliff, and hill was inseparably interwoven in his recollection with some legend, near or remote, in which he or his fathers had been actors. There a pile of stones marked the spot where the spoils of some memorable hunt and victory over the beasts of the forest had been gathered; there a mound covered the bones of his foes, and commemorated an ambuscade into which an invading enemy, many centuries ago, had been cunningly led, only to perish; there another mound pointed out the resting-place of a famous chief and warrior, who had died in defense of his country; and there a red pole on a beetling bluff designated the place where a young brave had rescued his bride from the fangs of a wolf, conquered the powerful animal by strength of muscle alone, bound him, and plunged him off into the blue waters of the river below. The burying-places were frequent—where the red men, in a sitting posture, with faces turned toward the east, and pipe, and bow and arrows, and a handful of parched corn, as a first provision when they should reach the hunting-grounds of the Spirit-

land, had for ages been committed to their native dust. The fields where they raised their corn, and the little pits by the side of the winding path where they buried it in winter, and sparse orchards of the apple, here and there, also added to the variety and picturesqueness of the scene, otherwise one of primeval hills, and vales, and water.

And why should not the Indian love his father-land? Surely it was beautiful—beautiful as the vale of Shiraz, beautiful as the Switzer's mountain home, beautiful as the fairy country from which the Moors of Spain were so barbarously expelled. The touching laments of the Moors, though centuries have since passed, are still held in warm remembrance by the civilized world. When the exiled Pole steals home through many dangers, to delight his eyes once more with a sight of the Vistula, and to stand for a brief hour by the graves of his fathers, we give him all our sympathy. This is right. The Indian, also, has feelings and attachments like other men; and the whole strength of his passionate nature centers in his love for his native land and reverence for the burial-places of his dead. From the valley of the Susquehanna, red with the memory of Wyoming, the Indians have long since been expelled, with all the terrors of fire, and sword, and rapine. For many years no red man dared set his foot on its soil. But more recently, as the memory of the past has faded, an occasional Indian, venerable with age, has been seen, stealing like a shadow along the ancient paths of that river, resting by the graves and mounds; or like a ghost, at eve or early morn, standing on some eminence, whence scenery, not easily to be excelled, of fringed and winding shore, meadow and mountain, which had been the home of his childhood, might once again be viewed, to cheer his heart against his final departure to the land of shades.

"Every foot of this ground is as familiar to me as the farm on which I was born," remarked the veteran Johnson to his

son, as the party, ranged in single file, wound along the bank of the river. "I've already pointed out to you the grove of alders where, when you was my little Paul, and scarcely higher than my knee, you were last seen with Wild Cat before he carried you off. Yonder, around that p'int, is the spot where we had the difficulty about the traps, and John undertook to shoot me."

Warwick regarded the localities with interest. Already the country and its hills were assuming a familiar shape to his mind, like the frame-work of a dream which one endeavors to recall; and as he gazed and gazed, dim images of the past crowded his recollection, and he even had the satisfaction of recognizing certain points—a rock, a spring, a tree—and of connecting them in his memory with some little incidents of his boyhood. How sad and delightful were these recognitions! He felt as though he could fall upon the earth and kiss those places that had known him when a child.

That in the lithe and brawny Mohawk chief, who marched before him at the head of his band, like a proper sovereign of the woods, he was to acknowledge the Indian youth who had been the playmate of his infancy, was to Warwick still more difficult. He gazed into his brown and manly face in vain, until the Mohawk unbent the sternness of his brow and smiled; when Warwick recognized the smile, for through it shone the heart. It came like a beam of sunlight, connecting the boy with the man, and Warwick knew him. The same had been the case with his recollection of his father. As he heard him talk and looked him in the face, feature after feature, motion and expression, gradually were recalled, until he came to realize the truth; and the distant past, which had so long lain in shadow, was restored again and blended with the present.

Aside from his fine person and noble bearing, the Mohawk spoke English fluently. Through the agency of missionaries, who were already prosecuting their labors, particularly in the

eastern portions of the Confederacy, he had received a respectable education, and was familiar with the whites, their habits, and their growing power. That he should view their increasing strength and constant encroachments with uneasiness and alarm was but natural; and during a halt of the morning at a spring, he took Warwick aside and expressed his apprehensions in warm and glowing terms.

"What is to become of our nation," said he, "with the French pressing us on one side and the English on the other? We are not unmindful of our treaties, we are not unfaithful to our great Father across the water; we desire peace that we may plant our corn in safety and take care of our women and children; but the torrents that pour down opposite mountains meet in the valley between, and carry a double destruction over the plains. So it is with us, encroached on and threatened on both sides as we are."

Warwick endeavored to allay the chief's uneasiness. He assured him of the paternal disposition of England, and the kind intentions of the Colonies, with respect to the Six Nations; and advised him, as in duty bound, and as he believed to be right and best, to repel the advances of the French in whatever specious form they might come, and rely for protection and safety on the justice and power of Great Britain.

"Protection!" echoed the proud savage. "The Nations will protect themselves, or die in defense of their country and the graves of their fathers. Still we may negotiate to peaceably preserve our rights. But our rivers are becoming dry—the fish like not the white man—and the moose and the deer flee before him toward the great river of the setting sun. Our hunting-grounds are becoming deserted, and the brave must turn himself into a squaw, and plant corn, to supply his little ones with bread!"

The close of this sentence was uttered with a profound and indignant contempt. The eyes of the chief flashed, the veins

on his forehead and temples swelled full, and he swung his arms through the air with an energy which bore witness to the intensity of his feeling and the strength of his determination. Warwick felt the force of his position, and knew not well what reply to make. Suddenly the eyes of the savage became fixed, wide open as they were, his face turned toward the clouds, and extending his hands he became rigid and still as a statue. Soon his lips moved and he spoke:

"Night fleeth before the day. The snow melts before the rising sun and disappears. The stars are bright, the moon is brighter, but what are they in the presence of the morning? They become shadows and are lost. The Red Men are like the stars and the moon—like the snow and the night. The mightier come and they fade away. Like the ice of winter they soften into rills and are carried to the sea. They can not stand before the thunder and the flame, the cannon-ball and the long knife, the axe and the plow. Their hunting-grounds turn to fenced fields, the deer flee away, and their women and their little ones are without food. Their wigwams change to white houses, their castles and places of council to the mill and the tall house with the bell, to call down the Great Spirit from the cloud. So the Great Father hath determined to take the Red Men to himself—to remove them to a better land—where game is plenty and the white men can not come.

"Oh, mountains of the bright and yellow sun, farewell! Pines that wave upon the hills, and point the Red Man to the Spirit-land; maples and cedars that whisper in the valleys and sing the little ones to sleep; birds that teach us how to love; beasts that inspire our braves with cunning valor; oh, Long and Crooked River! ye lakes of shining water, and all the streams that bring the flowers in the dawn of spring; graves of our sires, our country and its glory, farewell! No longer is the Mohawk the terror of the world; the voice of the Oneidas, the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas is still;

the war-path is deserted; the hunt has ceased; and the war-cry of the Nations that made the pale ones tremble, that sounded from the Great Salt Lake, that lies under the north star, to the Gulf Sea, that simmers in the sun, shall be heard no more! The Red Man goes to a better land!"

The Mohawk ceased speaking. A sad smile stole over his features and his extended arms fell. But ere the close of his rhapsody he had had another auditor besides Warwick. His wife, bearing his two children—the youngest a babe, bound to a board with soft and richly ornamented leather, so that every limb was strait, and nothing to be seen but its round, placid face and starry eyes, and swung to her forehead by a glittering belt of wampum and resting on her back; and the other a half-naked boy, perfect in form as a Psyche, which she carried in her arms—had followed him to take another farewell; and now, resting on one knee before him, held up the pledges of their love, and looked with a troubled countenance into his face.

The sight was touching and beautiful; for the Indian wife, though brown, was light for her race, and her limbs and features as gracefully molded as an antelope's; while her long shining hair, black as night, hung loose and divided upon her shoulders, and in the midst of it nestled her child.

"Omalah," said the chief, well pleased, "hast brought my boys for another good-bye? There, my brave ones!" continued he, kissing them both and taking the eldest in his arms; "and that for thee, Omalah," putting his hand kindly upon her shoulder and pressing his lips to her forehead. "Thine be it to teach our little ones to become fleet as the deer and soaring as the eagle, brave and terrible to our enemies as the hungry wolf, and gentle as thyself."

Another softer word of parting, as Warwick moved away, and the chief resumed his position at the head of his men, and gave orders to renew the march. Whether he was conscious

of his prophetic utterances of a few moments before could not be known. Certainly, now, he was every inch the king, with the attitude and look of one fully determined to vindicate his rights, from whatever quarter threatened. Warwick gazed on him with a feeling of awe, and a painful sense of the probable fulfillment of the prophecy took possession of his mind. He looked ahead through the shadowy vista of coming years, and seemed to see the Confederacy of the Six Nations, now the proudest and most powerful people of all the aboriginal tribes of the New World, fading away, perishing year by year and day by day, as iron is consumed by rust, or the trees of the mountain by fire. The thought made him sad; and sadly have the foreboding and the prophecy since been fulfilled.

But his own cares—the pressing strait of Don Manuel and his daughter—soon resumed their sway over his mind and heart, and like ourselves and our government, in the century which has succeeded, he forgot, or adjourned to a more convenient season, his momentary solicitude for the future of the Indian; though, certainly, his regard for the noble Mohawk, for Alwyn, and others of his friends of the wigwam and the woods, was deep and abiding. He had seen enough of them—his associations with them in infancy, and again in manhood, had been of a nature sufficiently close to enable him to understand them, both as to their evil and their good. If he had suffered at the hands of some, he had been befriended by others; treated with a confiding generosity and trust, which had opened the inner recesses of the Indian character to his inspection, and his own best affections and warmest gratitude toward them in return. To him there could be no doubt that the Indian possessed a heart, like other men; which only needed to be sought in order to be found, and that his good faith, if not abused, might well be trusted.

Smitten by our vices as with a plague, and taking not readily to our virtues, the native people of the country have dwin-

dled before us and perished, as though we had been a hoar frost or fire falling on them from the clouds. Our triumphs in civilization, art, learning, and government have been but the progressive records of their downfall and extinction. In scarcely a portion of the vast territory which yields allegiance to our flag, is there any vitality remaining to the Indian tribes, except in those central parts which our growth, in its rapid and exterminating foray, has not as yet reached. The mighty wave of subjugation, which commenced its swell on the shore of the Atlantic, three centuries ago, is soon to be met by another from the Pacific; and those central tribes which have hitherto mostly escaped—the Camanche, that Arab of the West, the Pawnee, the Sioux, and the Blackfoot; together with those skeletons of tribes which our cruel and mistaken policy has exiled from their ancient homes, and kept hoisting from point to point, as they were found still in the way—will share the fate of the rest. A hundred years more, and the Indian name is likely to be preserved only in the story of his wrongs, unless a change, radical and immediate, is introduced in our dealings with this persecuted race.

What this change should be is the province of the statesman, rather than the romancer, to determine; and yet some facts lie so near the surface of the question as to be within the reach of the most superficial observer. The Indian character is peculiar. Indian endurance has passed into a proverb, and yet the Indian is frail, and exhibits, as the whole history of the settlement of the New World by the whites proves, but little tenacity of life. His physical frame is well enough—indeed, it is a model for a sculptor—and under proper conditions bears fatigue, exposure, hunger and thirst which would prostrate any one else, except, perhaps, an Arab of the desert, and continues to do so to old age. But these conditions imply freedom—freedom of action and freedom of thought. He was never intended for a slave. Like the wild horse of the prairie,

he can not bear restraint, and if hampered by the lasso, curbed down by the bit, and driven from the fields and familiar haunts of his youth, and the legendary associations of his sires, he dies. His body can not readily be broken, but when conquered, it is easy to break his spirit and his heart.

This, I apprehend, furnishes the true reason of the decay of the Indian race. Furthermore, it is said that the Indian can not be tamed. This is not so. Naturally he is attached to the habits of his life, which were the habits of his fathers, and his fathers' fathers before him—to hunt and fish, and roam from valley to valley, from river to river, and from lake to lake. The policy of the whites has been to imbrute him with rum—the terrible fire-water, whose burning never goes out—to bargain and rob him of his lands, and then pension him off and remove him out of the way, like some worthless animal whose presence was no longer pleasant to the eye. If, instead of this, the natives of the country had, from the first, been solicited to become citizens, and merge themselves in the Republic, and if, as they saw themselves hedged in by the white settlements, and their hunting-grounds restricted and becoming unproductive, the arts of civilization had been properly commended to their attention, who will take it upon him to decide that the experiment would have failed—that, influenced by kindness and the necessities of their condition, their habits might not gradually have been changed—and that, instead of graves and monuments, minute and worthless remnants of tribes, scattered here and there, or forcibly removed to the Indian Territory west of the Mississippi, from which our government, in pursuance of its usual policy, is again endeavoring to expel them to a still more western home, destined to be equally temporary, we might not now have been able to show, in New York, Pennsylvania, New England, and other States, whole townships and counties of our native population transformed into thriving and valuable members of the state?

This experiment—the only reasonable and just one ever within our reach, after assuming that the country was to be conquered and possessed—is still to be tried. We throw our doors wide open to the world, and offer citizenship freely to all. Even the Hindoo and the Chinaman are not excluded. Why then should we exclude the Indian, either legally or virtually, who, both in body and mind, is greatly the superior of the Asiatic tribes, and of many of those from the different states of Europe who avail themselves of our liberality and domicile with us? Why should we not rather, especially when we consider the debt we owe the native lords of the New World, who have given a virgin continent into our hands, with all its wealth of beauty and resource, invite them to share it and its honors with us? To remove them from our path—to dispossess them of their soil, that we may appropriate it to ourselves—we do not hesitate even to resort to compulsion. If force be to be used at all, would it not be juster and better to resort to it in imposing on them the modes of civilized life, and in building them up into intelligent communities among us where they are? In the name of righteousness and mercy, let no more of the Red Men be exiled from the homes of their fathers! In the name of decency and right, let us extend free brotherhood and citizenship to the noble race from whom we have wrested this goodly land! Instead of warring with them —making a foolish display of the might of a great nation, by carrying armies and slaughter among these poor people, whenever, from real or fancied injuries, their wounded pride impels them to resent our encroachments—let us exhaust all the arts of peace and kindness, and expend our millions, with a patience and perseverance which no obstacles can tire, in the just endeavor to enlighten and preserve them. Our honor and dignity as a Christian nation demand this, humanity and the peace of our own minds require this change of policy at our hands.

In all that portion of this Indian continent, covered by the old United States—indeed, on to the Mississippi, it is already too late to do any thing but our *duty*. Some Southern tribes, not wholly wasted, and a few scattered handfuls at the North, will alone, of all the original native population, tax our bounty or our care. But west of the Mississippi, in the great basin of the Missouri, and up and down the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and along the shores of the Pacific, in California and Oregon, there are numerous native tribes, which are now beginning for the first to feel our heavy hand upon them. Toward them it is not too late to be forbearing and just. It is not too late to preserve them from the fate of their brethren —to nourish their hopes and flagging vitality into life again— and to make of them, in the end, good citizens of the Republic. But this can not be accomplished with the bayonet and revolver. It can not be achieved by tearing them from their homes, by breaking their spirit and their pride, by subduing them, or by corrupting and gradually wasting them away. It can only be accomplished by a wise and resolute persistency, to return no blow for blow, but, on the contrary, to protect and do them good, and build them up in intelligence and strength. No people are so low, no tribe is so debased, as to remain forever callous to the hearty efforts of those who would labor for their good; and the Indian, above all others, is blessed with a keen eye, and the ability to recognize his friends.

Chapter Forty-seven.

THE SCOUT. PLAN OF THE ATTACK.

"O'er deep morass and hill and tangled brake
The faithful runner kept his onward way,
Though night and desert howls conspired to make
His path a path of terror, where no ray
From moon or star reminded him of day."

MEANWHILE Alwyn, like the flying deer, or rather the pursuing hound, was coursing over the hills. At the first moment after the expedition had been determined, he had started on a scout in the direction of the Spanish camp. Well acquainted with the ground, and encumbered with no arms heavier than his hatchet, and no clothes more tightly fitting than his blanket, which, slung across his left shoulder and passing under his right arm, was made fast around the waist by a belt, he forsook the curves of the river and the beaten foot-path that run along its border, and pushing into the highlands, stopped not, and turned not aside, for ravine or hill, but strait as the flight of an arrow, in an easy but rapid run or Indian lope, he threaded the blind trail which none but an Indian could see, even by daylight, that led by the shortest distance to the southern slope of the Bend Mountain.

Precisely what were the thoughts of the runner as he pressed through the dark forest alone, would be curious to inquire. To a mere observer, his personal interest in the affair which lent wings to his feet and vigor to his muscles, would not have seemed great. Warwick, it is true, was his friend. For the white he had formed a romantic attachment, taking root in a

mixed feeling of gratitude and admiration, such as has often occurred in civilized life; and for one's friend, it is possible that a man may give his life. But mark the brown youth as he flies, and feel the throbbing of his heart, and hear him murmur the name of the White Bird of Spain; and as he catches a glimpse of a star brighter than the rest, shining through the branches of the trees, wishing that he might be able to pluck it down and place it as a jewel in her hair. And yet it was Captain Warwick's white bird that he was so anxious to make happy, by aiding to rescue her from the power of a man she hated to place her forever in the arms of another, and the one she loved.

Such were the feelings that nerved the young Indian, as with incredible speed he compassed the distance of some four leagues through the woods which intervened between the Oquago village and the Spanish camp; halting not, nor so much as breaking his *lope*, until he reached the cleared space which immediately surrounded the fortress. There he paused, but not for breath. It was still dark. Morning was at hand, but had not yet broke; and perceiving no stir in the camp, he stole silently to the ditch, which he bridged in a moment with a slender pole, on which he balanced himself across, like a rope-dancer, and gained the pickets. The ascent to the top of these was for him an easy task; the scaling of the sharp points above was attended with more difficulty and risk. But these he braved without a moment's hesitation; and, grasping the iron spikes with his hands, with a supple spring threw his body in the air, and supporting for an instant his whole weight on his arms, turned half round like a top, and dropped down lightly to the ground.

Here he made another pause, but discovering nothing to excite alarm, he started on his hands and knees in the direction of Don Manuel's lodge. This he gained in safety, but discovered to his dismay that it was inclosed by a patrol of senti-

nels. He waited and listened; and soon perceived that they often halted and gathered in a knot for a moment's conversation, and was very sure that he recognized in their low tones, as well as in their shadowy outlines, some of the most attached and unscrupulous menials of Don Ferdinand de Cassino. Alarmed at this, he determined at all hazards to know the worst. Taking advantage of a favorable moment, he gained a corner of the low building, and running up the lapped and projecting logs like a cat, in an instant was on the roof and mostly concealed from observation. Drawing himself along to the aperture left for the escape of the smoke, he thrust in his head and took a survey of the interior.

A lamp was burning in the room, and he had no difficulty in at once recognizing Don Manuel, the Lady Viola, and her maid Ruby. They were fully dressed as though they had not been in bed, and evidently in a state of alarm and agitation; but if prisoners, as every thing seemed to indicate, it was clear that they were not conquered. The Spaniard was walking the narrow room with a hasty stride, his pistols were in his belt and sword by his side; and he occasionally fingered his weapons as though he expected and desired an opportunity for their use at no very distant period. The daughter and maid were nervous and weeping; still the former constantly checked her tears to speak soothing words to her father, and to take him by the arm and endeavor to induce him to sit down.

Alwyn had little time to continue his observations. Daylight would break upon the scene in a very brief space—indeed, the haze of morning was already on the hills. He would gladly have leaped below and shared the fate of his white friends, whatever that was destined to be, had the duties with which his mission was charged permitted. As it was, he could not leave them without an effort to make known his presence, that they might be supported and encouraged by the knowledge that help was at hand; and his ingenuity readily

supplied him with a way, which he determined to risk, and forthwith proceeded to put in execution.

The little ring that had once been Viola's—a talisman, which, to him, possessed a mysterious charm—was ever in his possession as a sign of authority, when he scouted in the direction of the Spanish quarters: and now, attaching it to a slender thread, a sinew of the deer, he let it down through the opening, and swung it back and forth for the purpose of attracting attention. For several weary minutes this exercise was continued in vain, notwithstanding a supplementary addition of various slight sounds on which he ventured; until Ruby, rising from her seat and passing beneath, was struck by the missive in the face. She stopped, distinguished the shining circle, and grasped it in her hand. It was instantly recognized; and, following the thread upward with her eye, she discovered without alarm the round, pleased features of Alwyn faintly shadowed in the aperture above.

To call the attention of Viola and Don Manuel to this unexpected apparition was matter of a moment; and all gathered round, and the Spaniard mounted on a stool, in order to bring himself more immediately into the vicinity of the young scout. The Indian motioned them to circumspection and silence; and then, in a clear, round whisper, distinct instead of loud, audible in any part of the room, he said:

"Captain Warwick, Great Michael the White Eagle, Wisset the Mohawk brave and his red skins are in the woods. White Bird! they have guns and long knives; they'll soon be here: don't cry!"

Suddenly giving the ring a jerk, it flew from Viola's hand, where the poor lady had been pressing it as a silent, but joyful harbinger of hope, and Alwyn drew it up and disappeared from the vision of the prisoners. Carefully watching his chances, he descended from the lodge, scaled the pickets again with the same agility and safety as before, and was soon, with

the same measured paces that had brought him thither, pushing his rapid way down the mountain.

For several weary miles did the young Indian pursue his onward course with the like unbroken step, but this time by the river bank. The birds sung to him and flew about his path as he went—the robin, the black-bird, the lark, and many others—the turtle-doves cooed, the whip-poor-will, frightened, sprung from his bush, and the partridge from the track; the black-snake and the rattle-snake fled from his feet or were cleared at a bound; the sun poured down upon him, and hunger became clamorous in its calls, but without diverting him from his purpose or slackening his footsteps. Appeasing the demands of the last by simply tightening the belt around his waist, he pressed on; and at length had the satisfaction to discover the war-party, for whose appearance he was so anxious, winding its way, in single file, along the river bank.

As the faithful runner was seen approaching, the Mohawk called a halt, and the warriors, forgetting their usual caution in the confidence and exhilaration of the moment, received him with a burst of cheers which awoke the echoes of the forest and reverberated from the distant hills across the water.

The report of the young scout was made in a very few words, and the chiefs held a brief consultation. Warwick and Johnson could not well repress their apprehension at the apparent condition of affairs at the Spanish camp, and the dangers to which Don Manuel and the Lady Viola were exposed from the unscrupulous violence of Don Ferdinand; and the Mohawk chief, readily entering into their feelings, expressed his willingness to risk a day-attack, and push forward and punish the miscreant at once.

Their plans were soon matured, involving as they did only the simplest elements of warfare applicable to an assault on a fortified place—secrecy of approach, celerity of movement, and bravery at the ramparts. They accordingly recommenced

their march with a caution which had not hitherto been observ ed. All shouting, noise, and conversation louder than an undertone were suppressed, and scouts were thrown in advance upon the highlands and the path they were pursuing, in order to prevent their approach from being discovered by any chance straggler from the camp.

In this manner they reached the foot of the mountain. Stopping a little short of the open meadows, which here skirted the shore of the Susquehanna, each man cut with his hatchet a strong branch or bush, full of its verdant leaves, both to conceal his person, in case of need, during the ascent of the irregular and sometimes bare sides of the hill, and to use as fascines to fill the ditch, when they should reach the fortress. Thus provided they moved up the mountain, noiselessly as the panther when he is stealing on his prey. No word was uttered above a whisper, no dry limb was broken by a careless step, scarcely a leaf was rustled. Sometimes they marched in orderly single file, and again, at a motion of their chief, they would separate, each springing to the shelter and concealment of a bush or tree ; or they would drop motionless on the ground or crawl upon their hands and knees, as the nature of the occasion required, to cover them from observation. In this way they reached the immediate neighborhood of the fortress, where, concealed in a field of laurel behind an intervening bluff, they awaited the reappearance of Johnson, who had left them farther down the mountain for the purpose of spying out more fully the real posture of affairs within the camp.

Here, for a brief space, each minute lengthening itself into an hour, and each hour into a day, Warwick was compelled to smother his apprehensions, and content himself as best he might until the time of action should arrive. The task, indeed, was a severe one.

" Did you get no glimpse of Don Ferdinand, no clue to what had occurred, nothing by which you could determine whether

Don Manuel had been overpowered by force or stratagem?" inquired he of Alwyn.

"Nothing," replied the Indian. "Me no dare to make them talk. Logs have ears, and Alwyn could not run so fast as the Spaniard's bullets."

"You were wise," continued Warwick. "It is best as it is. A further risk might have endangered all—the assault, as well as your safety—but the uncertainty that precedes action, in the hour of peril, is more trying even to the soldier, schooled to patience and endurance as he is, than the peril itself when it comes."

The Mohawk was sitting beside Warwick and Alwyn, on a little patch of grass shaded by laurel bushes, and, pointing with his finger to a flowering vine, which was slowly toiling up a stalk, he said:

"A day and a night—a whole moon—it will take that creeper to work its way up through leaves and around branches, seizing hold of a twig here and another there, to help it on its way, and making twenty journeys around the laurel stem to no purpose but to render its progress secure as it advances; but by-and-by it will reach the top, and come out into the light and air, where it can see the sun, and blossom and be happy."

"Thank you for the lesson," said Warwick. "It is not a new one, but needs often to be enforced. The white, the Indian, and the flower, in this respect, are all alike. Patience—work and wait—is the common rule for each. As you would say in your figurative language, the strong eye of the eagle to look up, the courage of the wolf, and the perseverance of that running vine, are necessary to success. I am not loth to work, and will also learn to wait, during those lulls which most commonly precede the grand climaxes and catastrophes of life, as well as those periods when nothing can be done but to watch the germinating and maturing of the fruits of labor already expended."

"Thou art wise in the resolve," said the chief. "When we have done what we can, we have done all. The Great Spirit giveth victory or defeat, and it is useless for us to afflict ourselves, lest his purposes overturn our own. We must give way. But if we are men, he will treat us as men, and lead us by the hand into pleasant and fruitful fields and warm lodges; for the father delighteth to make his children happy. But your enemy shall howl to-day on his mountain, like the wolf that has lost her young."

Again the chief passed into a sort of ecstasy, such as Warwick had witnessed in the morning, and continued:

"The hawk is on the wing; the vulture and the crow forget their fear, and run upon the ground. The beasts of prey are yelling in the woods, as they scent the smell of blood. The clouds are gathering, the winds are crying in the north, and raging to get loose. They break their barriers and rush among the hills, and whistle through the trees. The voice of the thunder comes, and the lightning cuts like a knife. The rain pours down, and a rotten tree is crushed and falls with a great noise. The storm ceases, the bow of the Great Spirit spans the sky, and his fatherly eye looks out again upon the world through the face of the sun. The fields and the trees, bird, man, and beast, are refreshed, and rejoice in the beauty of his smile. But wo to the tyrant of the hour for whom the storm was prepared. He lies low with the tree that was smitten, and goeth back to dust. His maidens across the sea will call to him, but he will not hear. His mother and sisters will weep for him, but he will not see their tears. He shall rot with the snake and the turtle; but the white bird whom he had caught in a cage shall be set free and sing upon the hills; and by her side shall rejoice the young brave to whom she hath given all her love."

The Mohawk ceased speaking, and resumed his accustomed appearance, as though nothing unusual had occurred. War-

wick was too much occupied with his own thoughts—with the prophetic vision to which he had been listening, which seemed to shadow forth the impending events of the day, and to lift the mysterious vail from his dark future, prefiguring to his gaze a glowing horizon of light and a still haven of rest, at no great distance ahead, as the termination of the thick harvest of difficulties which he had latterly been reaping—to continue the conversation, and he accordingly made no rejoinder. He was not superstitious, but how could it be otherwise than that the weird utterance of the chief should add to his confidence and hope? It had this effect, and in calmness and courage he thenceforth awaited the development of his destiny.

Chapter Forty-eight.

A COUP-DE-MAIN. POSTURE OF AFFAIRS AT THE SPANISH CAMP.

"Ah, who will help me in my deep despair?
I call, but who will come? Man and the day,
Nature and Heaven, have fled, and left me here
To perish with my child."

RETURN we now to the Spanish fortress. The miserable Ambrose was already dead, illustrating very clearly in his last hours, that if the approach of the final messenger is generally alarming, to him who has spent his life in excesses and crimes, wrongs committed against his neighbor and himself, it is terrible indeed. Night shut in on a distracted camp. The men, released from their accustomed restraint, availed themselves of the largesses which Don Ferdinand had distributed liberally among them, and gave the time to carousal. Don Manuel and his daughter remained in their cabin. Signor Antonio and Doctor Oquetos were with them until a late hour; but Don Manuel himself, conscious of his weakness, and relying on the truce which the chevalier had publicly proclaimed, until the following day at noon, decided to make no change in his domestic arrangements, and to adopt no unusual measures for security or defense. A single sentinel was stationed at the door.

Don Manuel lay down in his clothes with his weapons by his side. He found it in vain to sleep. The pressing difficulties of his situation overwhelmed him; and with the rest, the absence of Michael Johnson, in himself a host, perplexed

him not a little. Sometimes he felt disposed to draw encouragement from the fact. It was possible that he had gone on a mission to Captain Warwick, and both might appear for his succor at the moment of his greatest need. Again, he feared that the old man had met with some accident in the forest; or, still more likely, that Don Ferdinand had caused him to be waylaid and slain. Nervous and restless, he turned from side to side, and morning was already at hand when he at length sunk into a troubled repose. From this he was aroused by the report of a pistol. Springing from his couch, and hearing the noise of a struggle at the door, he withdrew the bolts, but found that it had been secured from the outside. He proceeded to the windows, but was there met with weapons pointed within. He demanded an explanation. No answer was returned. He shouted to alarm his friends, and called on his few faithful remaining adherents to come to the rescue of their lord. But no one came, and at last he was obliged to admit that he was a prisoner in his own quarters. Humiliating as was this result to the haughty Spaniard, he was still consoled by the presence of his daughter. Viola was as yet safe, and he was with her, with arms in his hands, to defend her. In sorrowful attempts to console and support each other, the father and the child anxiously awaited the approach of day.

Don Ferdinand had now the complete mastery of the camp. By a coup-de-main he had carried every thing, and with scarcely a scratch on either side. A slight flesh-wound, inflicted by the shot of the sentinel at the door of Don Manuel's quarters, on one of his partisans, was the severest injury given or received. But having proceeded thus far, the chevalier seemed little inclined to follow up his advantage. The object of his pursuit was now at his mercy; and satisfied with his triumph, and prompted by his indecision, and still fain to cling to the semblance of fairness, he avowed the intention,

like an honorable knight, to await the set hour of noon for the full realization of his wishes.

"How lenient!" said Don Manuel, bitterly. "How merciful is Cassino to his prisoners—his intended wife and father! Why wait till noon? Why not celebrate his nuptials at once, by torchlight, and compel his bride to his bosom before the dawn of morning? He is losing much time, and subjecting himself to the imputation of an unmanly weakness. Besides, the day may blush, while night and its ghouls would rejoice to hold high carnival with him over acts like these. My daughter! my daughter!"

"Father!" said Viola, beseechingly, with face as white as snow, and lips that quivered with terror; "sit down beside me, and let us be calm. Has Heaven forsaken us, and all its good angels fled? I can not think it. There are ways by which God can save us yet. Shall we not trust him?"

"Trust Him!" echoed Don Manuel, impatiently. "We are forsaken by all—all on earth and all in heaven. Where is he we call good Michael? Where is Captain Warwick? and the Father of the forsaken hath forsaken us too, Viola."

"Oh, say not so, father!" said Viola, imploringly.

"I did not mean it," returned Don Manuel, hurriedly. "I retract it as foolishness hastily uttered; for now when help from the hand of man fails us, in this distant wilderness as we are; where no human eye can see us, no human voice can cheer us with hope, who can find us out but God? Who else can help us? If we cut loose from him, we are alone—afloat, Viola, on a shoreless sea."

Viola arose, and, throwing her arms around him, kissed him warmly on the cheek. He embraced her fondly in return, and led her back to the little stool on which she had been sitting. Both seemed more calm.

"Cassino has been too fast," continued the Spaniard, after a little pause. "He thinks to bend us, crush us, to his pur-

pose, but he will fail. Knows he not that I have still an arm, and weapons to defend my child? and, with God's help, I will use them to the utmost. Does he flatter himself that I may be compelled to assent to an act I abhor? He mistakes me. He may take my life, if God will—thine too, my daughter—but that is all. And should I perish and thou be left, Viola, I charge thee by thy father's honor, and by thine own, whatever woes may threaten, whatever may befall, to remain firm by the decision I have made. Whether he may give you an honest marriage or not, *any fate* would be better than to become his wife."

The Lady Viola, in her extreme pallor looking more like alabaster than flesh and blood, with the tears coursing down her cheeks, crossed her hands upon her breast, and, lifting her eyes to heaven, said:

"I bow to thy will, kind Father! but, with thy blessing, I am resolved not to degrade my body nor my affections, whatever this man may do, whatever may betide."

"Amen!" ejaculated Ruby. "I will stand by you, my lady, and die with you, so you hold firmly to that."

In a better frame of mind the three continued their efforts to console and support each another. They had looked the worst that could happen in the face, and resolved to abide it should it come, and felt strengthened. Don Manuel continued to walk the floor, for, notwithstanding the improved condition of his feelings, he could not at once overcome his physical restlessness; when, suddenly, a slight exclamation from Ruby arrested his footsteps, and, on looking in the direction she pointed, he recognized the young Indian, Alwyn, at the opening in the roof.

The brief interview which succeeded has already been narrated, but the surprise and joy with which the unexpected announcement of the scout filled the little party can not so readily be written. A moment more and he had vanished;

but he left hope behind him, and the Lady Viola and her maid dried their tears.

"Merciful Heaven!" ejaculated Ruby; "will my mistress be saved? The good Lord has heard us quickly."

As for Viola, she was too much affected to speak. She could only clasp her father, and rest in silence in his arms. Don Manuel pressed her to his breast, and his heart went up in thanksgiving to the Great Dispenser of events, whose mercy, but a little while before, he had been so ready to distrust.

"We are not forgotten, Viola," he whispered. "God is more mindful of us than we have been of him, or help, just at the moment of our extremity, when least to be looked for, would not have been provided. Pray, my daughter, that I may be forgiven."

By this time daylight had broken upon the mountain, and morning began to illuminate the interior of the cabin with its cheerful eye. With its coming, the sound of a bugle saluted the ears of the prisoners; and while they were in wonder as to the meaning of the strain, for it seemed to issue from the little court of the lodge, a herald was announced with a formal message from Don Ferdinand. That gentleman, with a strange forgetfulness of himself and his acts, now proposed to open a friendly negotiation with his fair prisoner and her father, for an adjustment of differences. As he ought to have anticipated, the offer was spurned by both with indignation. Don Manuel refused to hold any intercourse either with the herald or his master; and Don Ferdinand perceived that restraint had done nothing toward humbling the pride of the haughty Spaniard. Still the chevalier was not one readily to yield a point. Determined to carry his end, he was, nevertheless, alarmed at the present posture of the affair, and its possible termination. A bride absolutely forced into his arms, while her father was being bound in her presence, was a cul-

mination if possible to be avoided. Besides, he knew very well that Don Manuel was not likely to yield without a brave resistance; and though he had succeeded in mastering the camp, and shutting him up in his lodge, he now began to realize that his victory was not complete. The Lady Viola had still to be separated from her father, and Don Manuel to be disarmed. Hence, as the herald met with his rebuff, the loud voice of Don Ferdinand himself, in continuation of the effort, was heard in the court.

"Cassino, in his forbearance," said he, "makes still another offer to negotiate. Though in a position to command his rights, he prefers the gentler method of persuasion. He would have no hardnesses between himself and the wife of his love. He would have no thought of bitterness between himself and his old friend, and the friend of his father, Don Manuel Torrillo. He would be at peace with all, and especially with those so dear to him, and with whom he is so closely allied. And does he ask aught but what is his due—any thing that Don Manuel or his daughter has any proper pretext for refusing to grant? Does he demand more than the fulfillment of a most solemn contract? Has he not exhibited his devotion, the ardor of his affection, by years of patient attention, by thousands of miles of travel and vast expenditures of money, such as no other noble of Spain would have laid at the feet of any maiden, however fair? Then, if all this be so, will not the Lady Viola and her father listen to his just requests, and place themselves, by the act, once more in comfort and independence, such as their rank in life demands—or if not, what reasons can they show for the perpetration of an outrage, so undeserved, on an innocent man; or in defense of a course, on their own part, so inexplicable and strange?"

Don Manuel made no reply, and, after a brief delay, the chevalier continued:

"I will settle on the Lady Viola Torrillo, as my wife, to

her and her heirs forever, in addition to settlements already specifically stated in our marriage contract, long since drawn up, my estate in Andalusia, the income of which is six thousand pistoles a year. And if there be any other way which the lady or her father can devise, by which I may manifest the reality and strength of my affection, let it, I pray you, be named."

"Don Ferdinand de Cassino," said Don Manuel, in a firm, dignified voice, "the time for negotiation between us is past, never to be renewed. You spend your breath in vain, and exhibit your generosity to no purpose. I will have no terms with you—no intercourse; and, willingly, no word, henceforth, forever."

"Be it as you will, proud sir," returned Cassino, with a sneer. "I have known loftier tempers subdued—haughtier natures humbled. To me it is matter of little concern. No power can save you from my hand, and still I would avoid compulsion. The tears of the woman I love would touch my heart too deeply. The enmity, impotent though it be, of an old friend whom I so profoundly esteem, would jar my nerves unpleasantly. I would greatly prefer to make you both happy in the enjoyment of my wealth, my care, and my love. I give you yet to the hour of noon to render your final decision."

Thus saying, with another blast of the bugle, Don Ferdinand and his herald retired. Don Manuel, deeply chafed, like a caged lion, strode hurriedly back and forth across the room; while the Lady Viola, every nerve of her body in commotion, lay gasping for breath in the arms of her maid.

"Oh, this is too terrible," said she, faintly. "When will it end—when shall I be at rest? But how selfish I am, as though I alone were the sufferer from the tyranny of this man! Our weaknesses are very strong upon us, sometimes; but I will endeavor to exhibit more fortitude and courage. Will help come? This dark uncertainty is dreadful to endure."

With a powerful effort at composure she arose and tottered to the window.

"Help will come," responded Ruby, with a cheerful voice. "Think you Captain Warwick and good Michael will play the laggard? No. Before noon they will pull this mountain nest of the vulture down about his ears, and set us free."

With this she drew the rough board, mounted on legs, which answered the purpose of a table, under the opening in the roof: and placing thereon a stool, perched herself upon it, and protruded her head through the aperture to see what discoveries she could make. Tediously as dragged each moment by itself, the morning was rapidly wearing away. In the camp all was quiet—indeed, a stillness unusual and portentous seemed resting upon it. No sports were in progress, no one was astir. The sentinels stood mutely at their posts, and beast and bird were dumb. These who kept guard about the lodge had gathered, as she concluded, under its shady side, as she heard the low murmur of voices, hardly above a whisper, coming up in that direction, which was the only sound that met her ear. She gazed down the side of the mountain, pausing in her scrutiny at each tree, and bush, and field of laurel, but with no better success. Nothing stirred—there was not even a breath of air to shake an aspen-leaf, and the restless world for once seemed asleep. Disappointed, and fearful of being detected at her look-out, she descended again to the floor; but often during the anxious and uncertain hours which succeeded did she cautiously revisit the orifice, and renew her faithful watch.

It was a fervid summer day. Gradually the sun moved toward the zenith; and the party, so anxious during the terrors of the night for a sight of his face, and later, for the wasting of his hours, now regarded his advance with alarm, and gladly would have stayed him in his career. It seemed, indeed, as though he were coursing through the sky with a double speed,

with the determination to hurl them into the midst of the catastrophe which threatened, before its time. No signs of a rescue appeared, and it lacked but an hour of noon, when, suddenly, the keen eye at the roof—that of the faithful Ruby—espied a solitary footman winding along the rugged path which led to the fortress; and she announced the fact to the anxious listeners below.

"Who is he like?" inquired Don Manuel.

"His gait reminds me of good Michael," replied Ruby, "but he is so much hidden by the bushes that it is difficult to make him out."

"God grant that it may be he!" said the Lady Viola, fervently. "His honest face would shame our oppressor into better deeds, even though he were able to yield us no other aid."

"It *is* Michael!" said Ruby, with unguarded emphasis, loud enough, though still in a low tone, to reach the ears of the guard.

"Michael, is it?" echoed one of Don Ferdinand's satellites, as, stepping into view, he elevated his musket and drove the maiden below.

And Michael indeed it was, come to spy out the condition of the land. He was alone, his ancient rifle on his arm; and he proceeded at his usual leisurely gait, humming a tune as he went, and now indifferently casting his eyes at the sun, and again pausing to note some trifle in his way. He, even when within a rod of the gate of the camp, stopped and deliberately dissected one of those remarkable stones which Doctor Oquetos in his devotion to science had rendered familiar to every inmate of the fortress, and which the learned gentleman often declared, while collecting the vast cabinet of specimens which lumbered his tent, were among the geological wonders of the world. But, on arriving at that gate, the veteran was denied admission. He expressed a natural sur-

prise, and asked some questions; but the entrance was in the keeping of the most devoted minions of Don Ferdinand, and he received nothing in return but surly answers and directions to depart, while allowed to do so in safety. Johnson, however, seated himself on a stone, and managed to keep up a rambling conversation, from which, by the exercise of a little tact, he was shortly enabled to draw very accurate conclusions as to the situation of affairs within. At length he arose, loitered, and with still hesitating steps went away.

The general features of that part of the mountain on which the camp was situated are doubtless in the mind of the reader. The camp itself, it will be recollected, occupied a detached prominence, jutting from the mountain's side. Below, the ground stretched away in an uneven descent, here an eminence, and there a hollow or craggy ravine, until it reached the meadows bordering on the Susquehanna. Here and there were scattering trees; but the vegetation was principally of a more dwarfish description, consisting of bushes, five or six feet high, interspersed with clumps of a somewhat larger growth. Of these the laurel was by far the most abundant, frequently spreading into considerable fields. But large portions of the hillside were comparatively bare, being fringed, as it were, merely with a short beard of the huckleberry, wild grass, and the like. Above, the mountain was still more rough and precipitous, presenting to the beholder from below, patches of brown earth, alternating with ledges of gray rock, and beetling cliffs, and deep and somber chasms.

The mine, so called, was in the side of the hill opposite the camp, and nearly on a level with it. In that direction the gate of the fortress opened. As the work of excavating had progressed, the ravine running between the mine and the camp had been gradually filled with earth and stone, until a continuous causeway had been formed from the gate to the mouth of the cave. The somewhat extensive excavation had

also produced other changes worthy of notice. The superincumbent mass had felt the loss of a secure foundation whereon to repose, and several alarming, but not very important slides of earth and slate from above, from time to time had occurred. The last of these proved by far the most serious. It extended higher up than any of its predecessors, and, indeed, quite to the base of a large oval surface rock, which, partially undermined, at once assumed a very threatening aspect above their heads.

To this pressing danger immediate attention had been given. The rock, on examination, was found to be as completely detached from every thing else as though it had been dropped, like an immense ball, from the sky. It was also found, since the disturbing of its foundation, to rest nearly on a balance, and accordingly levers were speedily arranged for the purpose of starting it in its descent. But at this point a solemn pause ensued. Unless means could be devised to turn it aside from its legitimate course, it must inevitably find a resting-place in the mouth of the mine, closing it far more effectually than would a door of triple steel. But here again, all interest in the rock, and even in the mine itself, had been brought to a sudden conclusion by the occurrence of the outbreak between the Spanish leaders; and the stone, with its appended levers, still maintained its threatening position, at an altitude of some fifty feet above the mine.

Chapter Forty-nine.

DOCTOR OQUETOS EXALTED. A NOONDAY ESCALADE. THE PRIZE TO THE VICTOR.

"Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counselors to fear."

AS Michael Johnson disappeared from the camp, there was a smothered expression of regret on the part of the loiterers around the outworks at thus parting from the old man; for however it might be with him who now bore sway in the fortress, it was certain that the veteran had always been a good friend to them, and they could owe him no ill-will.

"I wonder where he will go?" said one, with a sigh.

"I do not know," returned another. "Perhaps among the Mohawk Indians, with whom, I have heard him say, he used to live."

"Like enough," continued the first speaker. "Perhaps he has no other home. Who could have thought that the gates would ever be shut against Mike, good Mike. I always feel better and more like a man when he is about. It is a bad sign. I wish I knew how this day would end."

"Whist!" said the other. "Be a little careful, man. It is our business to obey orders, and let others talk, and bear the blame, too, if there be any wrong done."

"Can that be?" said the first. "I have heard Father Antonio say, more than once, that those who commit crimes will have to answer for them, and I expect that you and I will

have to answer for our share in last night's work, as well as for what we may do to-day."

"Poh! poh! man," returned the other. "You talk like a child. If you feel like that, you had better back out. Don Ferdinand would only cut off both your ears, if he were to know of your preaching in this way."

"Back out!" echoed the conscientious man. "I am the last one for that, as you very well know. I was only regretting that we were obliged to treat our old friend Mike so shabbily; and I can not but feel a little troubled that we have been forced, in self-defense, to shut up our master, Don Manuel, and the Lady Viola, and Father Antonio, and—"

"Stop!" said the other, imperatively, "or I will report you. Do you not know that you are talking treason, man? Treason, sir, is a great crime; far greater than merely shutting one's master up in his quarters for a day or two, in self-defense, as you say. We do as Don Ferdinand tells us, and he pays us for it, does he not? Answer me that. Well, what more have we to say about it? It is his business, not ours."

The parties, during this conversation, were standing near the palisades, at a point which looked below, and to the east of the encampment. At this juncture the attention of the last speaker was attracted by a motion of the bushes nigh by on the hillside, and he proceeded to express his opinion that a deer had ventured into the close proximity of the fortress, and regretted that his musket was not at hand, that he might try him with a shot.

"But," said the other, "while we have been talking here, I have seen a maneuver with the bushes which I am certain never was got up by the deer. But do not let me detain you. I suppose you want to report me to Don Ferdinand?"

"Nonsense, man! What was it you saw?"

"You perceive that ravine below, yonder. It is a water-

course when it rains and the torrents are pouring down the mountain; and, as you see, is as bare of vegetation as the back of my hand. Not long since there was a row of bushes strung across it, like a file of men; and I watched it, while you were so busy lecturing me, till the last bush marched up the bank on this side, and disappeared among the laurel."

"Well, now, that is very strange," replied the listener to this marvel. "No one ever saw the like in old Spain, and I guess, my man, you are joking?"

At this point the learned Doctor Oquetos, who, as a gentleman of the lancet rather than the sword, whose professional services were liable to be needed at any moment, had, after a few hours' durance, been set at liberty by Don Ferdinand, made his appearance, and was at once appealed to in explanation of the walking bushes. The doctor applied his forefinger to the region of his reflective organs, and maintained a dignified silence for the space of half a minute. He then broke forth in a sort of rhapsody:

"O that I might have seen it, I myself! it were a wonder well worth the reporting, for history and science do record a like event but once, when Birnam wood walked up to Dunsinane. America! thou land of many marvels, of giant trees and promenading bushes, thou shalt hereafter quite surprise the world, when thou canst show thyself; and science, goddess of my fond devotion, shall hang upon thy brow her laurel—crimson—golden—myrtle—cap."

While the doctor was thus struggling to renew his acquaintance with Shakspeare, and also to discover the proper adjective and noun wherewith to close his period, his speech was suddenly cut short by sounds as unexpected as they were startling First came a shot from a sentinel, and then the terrible war-whoop of the savages; and ere the reverberations of the cry had died away, it was known that the Indians in force were upon them. They were seen quitting their covers, the patches

of laurel and other bushes which had concealed their approach, and like so many beasts of prey, furious with hunger, were rushing up the bank to the attack of the fortress.

To the camp this daring assault at broad noon was a perfect surprise. There were men enough and arms enough, in connection with its comparatively strong outworks, its mound, its palisades and ditch, for its defense, even against a more powerful force than now threatened it; but at this hour of the day the men were scattered hither and thither, some playing at quoits or other games, some telling stories to a crowd of gaping listeners, and some asleep, their weapons in one place and they in another; and unfortunately for them, their experience in Indian warfare, at an emergency like this, was well calculated to add to their dismay.

Don Ferdinand, at the time of the alarm, was quietly reclining on his couch, and occasionally sipping a little wine, in order to brace his nerves for the anticipated grand climacteric of the coming noon. But quite a different scene awaited him from that on which his fancy had been reveling. As the well-known cry struck his ear he sprung to his feet, and hurling the half-emptied bottle at the head of an attendant, rushed out of doors.

For a time the voice of Don Ferdinand rung in trumpet tones, high and clear through the camp. He rallied his men; he issued his orders promptly; he infused courage into them by the energy of his tones and gestures; and, better than all, he placed himself at their head, and led them to the wall. But as he approached the point of attack, he recognized a voice among the assailants which sent more terror to his heart than all the yells of the savages. It was the voice of Charles Warwick, and mingling with it were the cool inspiring tones of Michael Johnson.

The chevalier recoiled. He remained on the ground only long enough to issue some general directions, when he turned

again toward the center of the camp. The day he already considered lost, and with that conviction came a resolve as desperate as himself. He ordered the priest Antonio to be summoned, and with a few attendants proceeded directly to the quarters of Don Manuel. He unfastened the door, but found it barred within by the sword of the Spaniard. He directed him to be seized. His menials attempted to obey, but the first one that approached fell a victim to the enraged father's sword. Furious, despairing, Don Ferdinand drew a pistol and fired. Don Manuel fell, and the Lady Viola, with a wild shriek, tottered forward and threw herself on his prostrate body.

Father Antonio had now arrived. There was no longer any resistance to be feared, except from Ruby O'Brady; and she, poor girl, horror-struck at the scene before her, had flown to raise her mistress in her arms, and was easily secured. The chevalier entered the lodge. Ordering one of his minions to support the half fainting Viola, he took her white hand in his, and bade the priest perform the marriage ceremony.

Father Antonio was bewildered with affright.

"Reflect, my son, on what you are doing," he stammered out.

"I have reflected," said Don Ferdinand. "This is the set time, and it shall not pass."

"But her father is dying," objected the priest.

"Were the whole world dying," exclaimed the chevalier, fiercely, "it should not stop me. She is my wife already, as you very well know, and it now needs but a word, a form, that the fact may have a convenient voucher. Go on!"

"I will not," replied Father Antonio, firmly. "The curse of Heaven light on us both if I do."

Don Ferdinand trembled with passion. He saw himself hedged in at every turn, his designs one by one frustrated, and more than all, the Lady Viola, the prize for which he

had sacrificed so much, slipping from his fingers forever. But there was little time for deliberation. The cries without at the breast-works were growing louder and louder, and he perceived that they were largely made up of shouts of cheer and triumph from his foes. There was only one way in which he could conclude the argument at all to his satisfaction with the stubborn priest, and springing upon him he plunged a poniard in his heart. Shaking the reeking blade in the air, he screamed in the ears of his horrified menials:

"Hinds! caitiffs! gape not at me! Thus Cassino punishes the disobedient!"

He gave some hasty orders. He went out himself to note the progress of the battle, and the exact present posture of affairs, and smiled with a hellish malignity as he ascertained that the passage to the gate and the mine remained unobstructed. Returning, he gazed for an instant on the inanimate form of the Lady Viola; but there was no compunctious relenting in his looks. His face was as pale as that of the dead priest at his feet. His eyes glared like a serpent's: but he was calm—calmer to appearance than he had been at any period for days. Taking the Lady Viola in his arms, he gathered his followers around him in a circle and passed out of the lodge. Her light form lay across his shoulder, and her long, black hair hung down his back and waved behind him in the wind as he rushed forward at a headlong speed toward the gate, and through it disappeared from the camp.

The point where Johnson and his allies had made their assault was quite to the east of the one at which Don Ferdinand accomplished his exit. It had been selected solely for the reason that it lay in the direction of their approach, and was soonest reached after quitting the cover of the bushes. Had it not been for the delay in bridging the ditch, the works would have been carried before the Spaniards were prepared

to resist. As it was, Warwick, Johnson, and the Mohawk, with a score of their red followers at their heels, were on the wall as soon as its defenders. A hand-to-hand conflict ensued, which had been too suddenly precipitated, and was too closely pressed for the exercise of firearms. Besides, Johnson was anxious to avoid bloodshed, and what was better, had succeeded in impressing his wishes, in this particular, fully on his associates; and furthermore, it so turned out, that a very small part only of the guns of the Spaniards were loaded. A few straggling shots, from time to time, were exchanged, but the conflict was face to face over the pickets. The mastery of these, for some minutes, was hotly contested. At length breaches were effected; the assailants poured through; their leader was not present to encourage them, and the Spaniards slowly fell back.

Johnson and his allies having thus obtained a firm foothold within the fortress, demanded its surrender. To this no reply was returned. The Spaniards continued to retreat in the direction of the gate, and finally, quickening their pace, rushed through in a body, and closed and barred it after them.

At this moment, when the victory seemed complete, and the triumphant shouts of the conquerors shook the air, the young Indian, Alwyn, with a look of dismay, directed the attention of Warwick out upon the causeway. The eye of the American was just in time to take in the receding figure of Don Ferdinand, as, with the body of the Lady Viola on his back, he disappeared within the mine. Uttering a cry of anguish, Warwick pressed forward to the gate. But its bolts and chains resisted his efforts. Calling for an axe, with repeated blows, driven home with all the energy of desperation, he hewed into the massive fabric, when Johnson, coming up with a heavy beam of wood, directed by the united strength of a score of his men, with a stroke and a crash swept the impedi-

ment from their path, and Warwick, the White Eagle, and the Mohawk, their exulting followers pressing close behind, passed out abreast upon the narrow way, which seemed destined to be the scene of a still final struggle.

Don Ferdinand, meanwhile, having deposited his unconscious burden in the mine, like an angry wolf from his cave, came forth to the defense. He had now lost all motive but revenge. No longer careful of himself, he rallied his men, and with his sword in one hand and a pistol in the other placed himself at their head. The parties met midway on the elevated path. As they approached each other, Warwick sprung ahead of his associates, and requested them to leave the wretch to him. Johnson and the Mohawk accordingly came to a halt, and checked the advance of their forces; and the movement, singularly enough, was understood and followed on the part of the Spaniards, leaving a clear field in the center to the combatants. While yet several paces intervened between the two, Don Ferdinand leveled his pistol and snapped it. But the instrument contained no leaden death within its walls; its contents had been lodged in the bosom of Don Manuel Torrillo, his oldest and best friend, and one who had been true to him much longer than he had remained true to himself. Throwing the weapon madly from him, with his sword he closed in with his foe.

Once more Charles Warwick and Don Ferdinand de Cassino stood hand to hand and breast to breast, rivals in love, but antipodes in all else. Neither spoke, and an equal fury and determination seemed to animate them. The terrible passions which consumed the Spaniard, the sting of fancied injuries, of disappointed love, and jealousy, and black revenge, were printed on his face like clouds and flashes on a warring sky. Even the noble Warwick, in his desperate strait, appeared more like a demon than a man; and as the eyes of the twain shot forth their angry streams, it seemed as though each

glance was armed with arrows. The play of weapons which succeeded was marked with consummate activity and skill. Don Ferdinand, having thrown every thing on this last stake, remained collected; and Warwick, conscious that this was the very pivot of his life, as well as that of another, even dearer than himself, suppressed his swelling heart and kept it pent within. Both dealt their rapid blows with right good will, and their burnished brands, as they circled in the air, gleamed like lambent tongues of fire. But stroke and thrust and feint continued to be parried; and the eager spectators—the Indian and the white—as they looked on with staring eyes, and hair stirred with strange life, seemed stiffening in their tracks.

Content was Michael Johnson to rest the fate of the day and the fortunes of the Lady Viola on the good cause and the good sword of his son. But while the combat still hung in suspense, and every thought and sense were centered there, the attention of the veteran was attracted away to the projecting rock which overhung the mine. He discovered men around it handling the levers, and in a moment the hellish purpose of Don Ferdinand, to destroy the Lady Viola if he could not save her to himself, flashed on his mind. Dropping his weapons where he stood, he sprung past the combatants and threw himself into the ranks of the Spaniards. Taken by surprise, and seeing him unarmed, and more than all, accustomed to respect him, they gave way and suffered him to pass on unmolested.

This sudden movement of Johnson by no means escaped the notice of Warwick, but he had little time to give it thought. With the fact itself came the impression that it was in some manner connected with the safety of the Lady Viola, but how he could not stop to guess. Happily for him, no suspicion of the horrible truth at the moment gained access to his mind. With Don Ferdinand it was otherwise. As the old man

strode by him, like a winged colossus, he readily divined his object, and he perceived that his own sun was nigh to the wave, and about to set in a vast and unknown ocean. He rallied his flagging powers. He struck with the rapidity of light, and with the force, as it seemed to him, of the resistless lightning; but in vain. Warwick was a tower he could not move; and as the black wing of despair flapped over his heart and brain, covering his horizon with shadows, in utter hopelessness he waved his hand. The abstraction, though but momentary, was fatal to his safety. The sword-arm lost its supremacy in the action of the other, and he received the point of his adversary's weapon in his bosom. The quivering steel staid not in its career until the hilt smote against his chest with a heavy, dull sound. The silver chord of life was cut in twain, and he fell dead.

But the terrible signal, indicated by the motion of his hand, while yet the soul was in him, was seen and understood. His obedient slaves threw themselves on the levers. The massive stone trembled, rocked, reeled heavily forward, and fell thundering down with the force of an avalanche. But while it yet hung balanced, as on a pivot, Michael Johnson, with the Lady Viola in his arms, was discovered in the mouth of the mine. He was well aware of his danger. The grating, jarring death above him had sufficiently warned him of that, and he was stretching every nerve, and taxing every power, and calling to his God that he might escape it; and more for the lily burden that he bore than for himself. But the mighty missive delayed not. It came, enveloped in a cloud of dust, and struck, with a report like a piece of ordnance, and a shock which made the vast hill tremble. For a moment the fate of Johnson and Viola was unknown. Warwick sprung forward, and passed unquestioned and unnoticed through the midst of the confounded Spaniards. He penetrated the cloud of smoke; he shouted; and with a cry of joy

received from the hands of his father the Lady Viola, pale and trembling like a frightened bird, but breathing and unharmed; and, as he clasped her to his heart, he told her that her troubles were ended, and promised her a safe and happy shelter in his bosom forever.

Chapter Fifty.

CONCLUSION.

"Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A word which makes us linger—yet—farewell!"

THE woof whereof the web of this history hath been woven is at an end; the shuttle creaks and stops as it attempts to play; the fates stand ready with their shears, and why delay to cut it from the loom? Shall we detain our audience by the sleeve while we proceed to show with what prolixity the flying threads might be knotted into festoons of fringed and tasseled patch-work at the end? No. The catastrophe is over, the spell is broken, and what boots it to describe, in tedious and laboring sentences, the scarcely more tedious return of the party to New York; how Mistress Warwick rejoiced on again embracing her son; how Warwick and the Lady Viola were shortly married, the gallant Major Van Quirk and Amelia Clinton, soon to become Mrs. Gates, officiating as bridesman and bridesmaid on the occasion; how Michael Johnson lived for many years, in summer the White Eagle among the Mohawks, in winter the veteran hunter with his son, stealing the hearts of his grandchildren, and the esteem even of the most elevated and aristocratic circles of the city; how Don Manuel Torrillo recovered of his wound, and regained his estates both in Mexico and Spain; how Doctor Oquetos returned to his native land, where his valuable contributions to the cause of science—his cabinet of American stones, and several learned essays on scientific topics connected with the New World—were rewarded with

the chair of Geology in the University of Salamanca; how the Indian, Alwyn, received every kindness and a liberal education at the hands of his white brother, but, like a true Indian, ultimately returned to the haunts and habits of his fathers, where through every vicissitude of his checkered career he managed to preserve, and wore in his bosom as an amulet, a raven lock of hair which that more fortunate brother, who possessed the original to whom it once belonged, at his special request had committed to his keeping; how the Amazonian maiden, Ruby O'Brady, crowned the aspirations of the faithful Solyman with her hand; and how Major Van Quirk lived and died a bachelor; and how, at his demise, which took place near half a century later, an unexpected difficulty occurred in the preparation of his obituary, and how the place where his age should have been was unavoidably filled with a dash.

Nevertheless, as the author closes his labors, and commits the fictitious personages, who have moved so long in these pages at his command, into the hands of his readers, he would not disguise that he feels for them something of the anxiety of a tender parent for his offspring when he sends them forth to seek their fortune in the world. He would fain have the children of his fancy well received, and would be gratified to learn that their characters were considered well formed and their manners respectable. Still, he is aware that youth, as they make their advent on the stage of action, must be left, in the main, to secure their own position by a proper exhibition of their quality and parts, and that it would not become him, on the present occasion, to do more than to commend the objects of his solicitude to that common courtesy and forbearance which are freely extended to all. So, with a simple expression of the wish, that the acquaintance may prove agreeable, he sends them forth with the paternal blessing to find or make a way on the uncertain Sea of Life.

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